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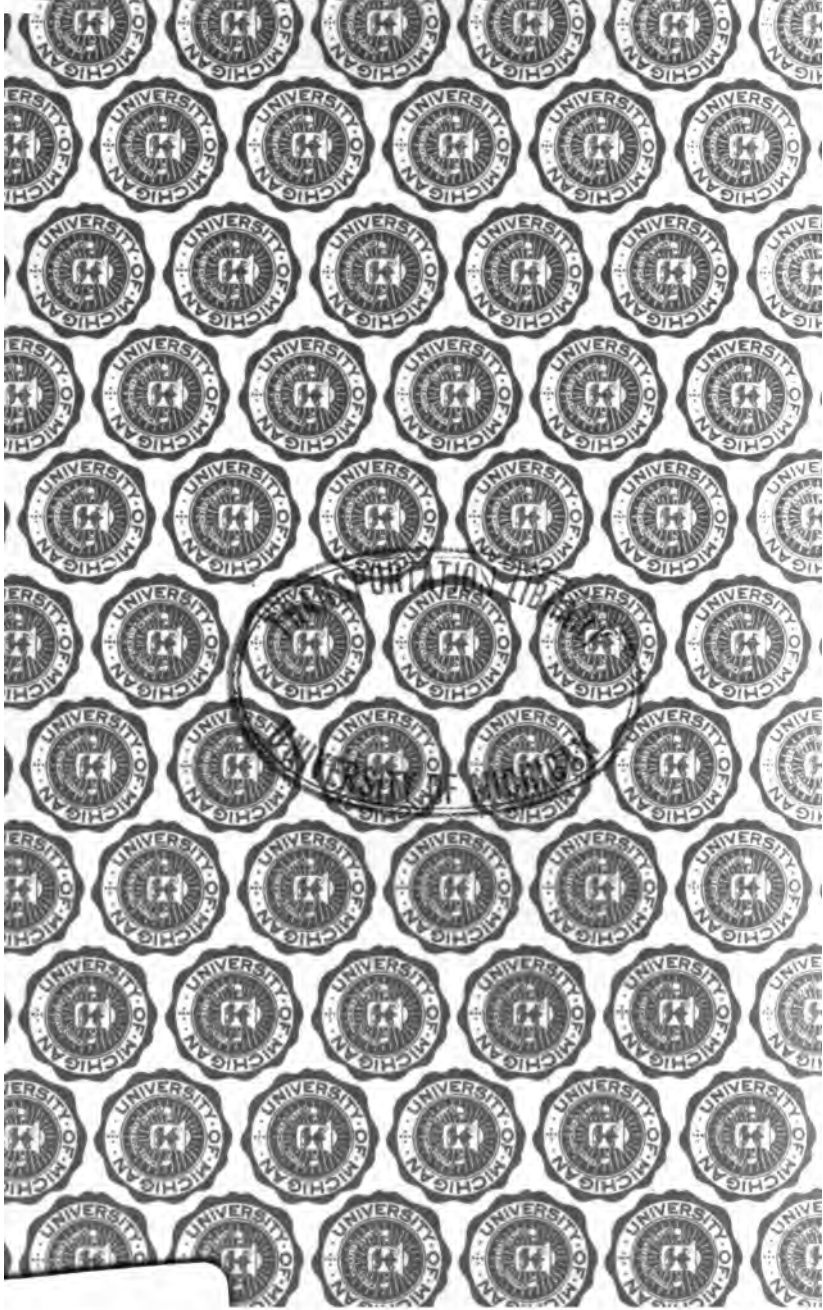
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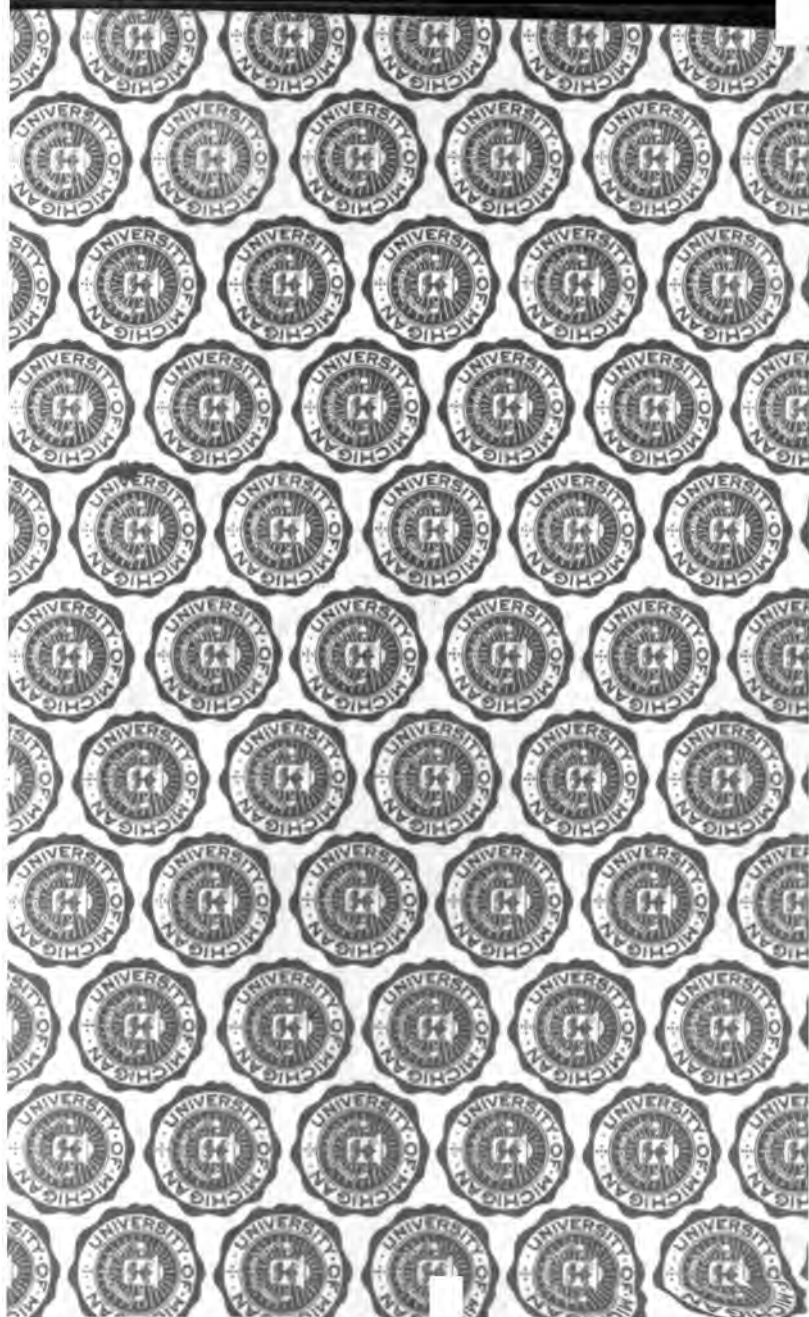
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A GLANCE AT THE  
**RISE, PROGRESS, STRUGGLES & BURTHENS**

OF  
RAILWAYS, STAGE CARRIAGES,  
STREAM VESSELS, MAIL COACHES,  
OMNIBUSES AND HACKNEY CARRIAGES;

WITH  
**AN APPENDIX,**

CONTAINING REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS  
AGAINST THE TAXATION OF INTERNAL CONVEYANCES;

STATISTICS; AND OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION.

*Brayfield, John & Co.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN a book on "Roads and Railroads" which came into my hands after the following pages were penned, the writer quotes a remark of Reynal's, that "Wherever we find no facilities for travelling from a city to a town, or from a village to a hamlet, we may pronounce the people to be Barbarians."

That many of our country districts are rapidly approaching to this lamentable want of facilities of transit for the laboring classes cannot be doubted by the traveller. The cause of such a semi-harbarous state I have endeavoured to point out, and sought to suggest the remedy, to be summed up in a few words; the *cause*, is an unjust and oppressive system of taxation on the conveyances; the *remedy*, abolish the taxes on travelling.

Whatever imperfections may appear in my compilation, (and in wishing to give concise glances at the many incidents of a national question, I am certain I cannot be free from them) I trust will be pointed out for correction in a subsequent impression.

To the numerous gentlemen who have so liberally subscribed their names for copies of the hand-book, and to the Stage Coach owners throughout England, Scotland and Wales, who have readily supplied information and suggestions, I must tender my warmest thanks; and in the hope that my reader will be instructed by the little book, I respectfully submit it.

J. E BRADFIELD.

19, Strand, London.



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#### ERRATA.

Page 48. The artist has exhibited the driver's seat in the engraving of the wood cut on the near side instead of the off side.

Page 84, line 24, for "Ramsay's," read "Rumsey's."

Page 86, line 11, for "Mr. G. Stephens'," read "Mr. G. Stephenson's."

#### ROADS—COACHES—STAGE COACHES.

**COACHES** were introduced into England in the sixteenth—Stage Coaches in the seventeenth—Mail Coaches in the eighteenth—and Railways in the nineteenth century. Each of the four last centuries has added to, and improved upon, the systems of passenger and commercial transit.

The internal modes of land travelling, prior to the introduction of coaches, were, on horseback; by car or chariot—a vehicle used by the wealthy classes, but without springs; by waggons;



and by strings of horses following each other, laden with goods—upon which an occasional passenger was put—called Pack-horses. For the sick, and ladies of rank who did not use the saddle, the “litter” was adapted: a kind of square or triangular box, supported on two poles, placed on the shoulders of two men, or two horses or mules. Persons were in the habit of collecting together and travelling in company with these conveyances, or in gangs by themselves, on horses where they had them, on foot where they had not, for their mutual protection.

Thus journeyed the merchants with their wares; the farmers with their produce; squires, peasants, the young and the aged, to their relatives and friends; thus jogged on those bent to parties at merry meetings and festivals; thus travelled the young students to and from seats of learning—to Oxford and to Cambridge. In many of its incidents our past modes of travelling resembled, on a small scale, the caravans of the East: and the habit in the early ages of numbers rendezvousing and congregating to march off together for mutual protection and company, remained until a very recent date—pack-horses were in use in the last century, and within the present century solitary pedestrians would frequently wait at Epping and Kensington for others, before they even proceeded on to the metropolis. Far more extensive, however, was the traffic on the river and the sea coasts. It was the custom to make for a town on a river from which boats were generally bound with merchandize, and proceed in sailing vessels, by most circuitous routes and dilatory passages. The interior of the country was little cared for, whilst the water-side towns grew in proportion to the capabilities of the stream; the River was **THE GREAT HIGHWAY**.

Roads, or good roads when made at all, were not constructed for mercantile or passenger traffic, but for military purposes. Times are changed, and so is the spirit of men.—We construct roads for commercial pursuits and social intercourse;—our ancestors made their roads to hold the people in subjection.

The use of private and public carriages, for many years after their introduction, must have been very limited; the state of the roads retarded their progress. Stowe says that Queen Elizabeth’s coachman, one Bouen, a Dutchman, in 1564, first brought coaches

into England—the origin, however, is Hungarian ; that the first coach built here was for the Earl of Rutland, in the year 1565. But if coaches were introduced and even used in Elizabeth's time, neither "Good Queen Bess," James I., Charles I., nor the Commonwealth did any thing to improve the general internal communication of the country. The Governments of Elizabeth and James, and the Commonwealth, sought to confine the metropolis within certain limits ; and Charles I. attempted to put down coaches.

Permissive laws were passed in the reign of Henry VIII., giving liberty to land owners in Kent and Sussex to enclose commons, &c., and make roads ; also to compel the inhabitants to repair the streets between the Strand Cross (St. Clement Danes Church) and the Village of Charing, Holborn, Southwark, &c., described in the statutes to be "very noxious, and in many places very jeopardous." In 1555, the act 2 & 3 Philip and Mary, cap. 8, enacted that two surveyors should be appointed for each parish, and that the inhabitants should be obliged, according to their respective abilities, to furnish labourers, carriages, tools, &c., for four (afterwards increased to six) days, to work at the roads in the parish, under orders of the surveyors\*. Still the roads remained in a deplorably wretched condition ; and we have to look to a period even long subsequent to the introduction of stages, for substantial improvements.

Hackney coaches and sedan chairs were introduced in the reign of Charles I. In 1634, that monarch issued his royal proclamation, stating that "the general and promiscuous use of coaches were not only a great disturbance to his Majesty, his dearest consort the Queen, the nobility, and others of place and degree, in their passage through the streets," but that "the streets themselves were so pestered, and the pavements *so broken up*, that the common passages were hindered and more dangerous ;" and, instead of stimulating the reform of the roads to meet the times, he restricts the coaches ! The proclamation forbids the use of "hackney carriages in London, Westminster, or the suburbs thereof, except they be to travel at least three miles out of the same !!" And the

\* M'Culloch on Taxation.

insolent edict concludes with this arbitrary and absurd exaction, which enables us to measure the distance between the 16th and the 19th century—between English freedom as it existed before the civil wars and as it now exists\*. “We expressly command and forbid that no person shall go in a coach in the said streets, *except the owner of the coach shall constantly keep up four able horses for our service when required.*”

The Post Office was established in 1635 (Charles I.); the system was that of carrying letters on horseback, which continued till the close of the 18th century. It is said that expresses were carried into Scotland in four days, in Henry VIII.'s time, and in Charles I.'s time, in three days; which, if true, was much more expeditious than in 1733, when the rate of Post Office speed was 80 miles in twenty-four hours†. Three-and-a-half miles per hour was the rate of speed in 1784.

Stage coaches came into limited use immediately after the Restoration of Charles II.

From the description of the state of the greatest highway—the northern road—in 1663, upon the authority of the preamble of the 15th Chas. II., c. 1., travelling must have been greatly neglected in the time of the Commonwealth. This is believed to be the first turnpike act; its preamble states, that “the ancient highway and post road leading from London to York, and so into Scotland, and likewise from London into Lincolnshire, lieth for many miles in the counties of Hertford, Cambridge and Huntingdon, in many of which places the road, by reason of the great and many loads which are weekly drawn in waggons through the said places, as well by reason of the great trade of barley and malt that cometh to Ware, and so is conveyed by water to the city of London, as other carriages, both from the north parts, as also from the city of Norwich, St. Edmondsbury, and the town of Cambridge to London, *is very ruinous, and become almost impassable*, insomuch that it is become very dangerous to all His Majesty's liege people that pass that way.”

If the most important outlet was so “ruinous and dangerous,”

\* Craik on Commerce.

† Jacobs' Law Dictionary.

er highways were even more dilapidated. A writer in 1673, years after this first turnpike act, furiously opposes stages. "Is 'or a man's health to be laid fast in the foul ways; and forced to de up to the knees in mire; afterwards sit in the cold till teams of ses can be sent to pull the coach out? Is it for their health travel in rotten coaches, and to have their tackle, or perch or etree broken, and then to wait three or four hours, sometimes f the day, and afterwards to travel the whole of the night, to ke good their stage\*?" Cowley the poet, writing from Chertsey 1665, inviting Dr. Sprat to visit him, says, "you might conveniently come hither the way of Hampton town, lying there one ght."

In Queen Anne's reign, Prince George of Denmark, in 1703, nt from Windsor to Petworth to meet Charles II. of Spain, on way from Portsmouth. "The last *nine* miles of the way," says e of the prince's attendants, according to an old scrap-book, "cost *six hours'* time to conquer them, and indeed we had never done, our good master had not several times lent us a pair of horses t of his own coach, whereof we were enabled to trace out the y for him."

In 1706 a stage coach was advertised to perform a journey from ndon to York, 196 miles, in four days. In 1712 another coach dertook to go from London to Edinburgh, 400 miles in *thirteen* ys!!!

In 1742 a coach started on Mondays from the "Rose Inn," Holborn idge, arriving at the "Hen and Chickens," Birmingham, on the Wed-day; re-starting from Birmingham, and arriving in London on turday, travelling about 40 miles per day, or 4 miles per hour, ich rate of speed was about the same as the Oxford and other ches running at this period.

The southern roads were worse than the northern, and continued so till about 1748, when the proud Duke of Somerset "had a house Guildford, which was regularly used as a resting place for the ght by his family." A manuscript letter from a servant to the ke, dated from London†, and addressed to another at Petworth,

The grand concern of England, quoted in one of Chambers's publications.  
Chambers's Journal, Vol. V.

acquaints the latter that the duke intended to go from Le thither on a certain day, and directs that "the keepers and pe who knew the holes and the sloughs must come to meet his with lanthorns and long poles *to help him on his way.*"

A circuitous, and equally dilatory, coach was established bet Birmingham and London, *vid* Oxford, in 1749, but was consi an advantage, though it took three days to perform its journey letter, written by Lady Luxborough to Shenstone, contains an es supplying a specimen of the travelling of those days. Her lad says (1749), "A Birmingham coach is newly established, *to our emolument.* Would it not be a good scheme (this dirty we: when riding is no more a pleasure) for you to come some Mo in the said coach from Birmingham, to Breakfast at Barrell's they always breakfast at Henley), and on the Saturday follow would convey you back to Birmingham, unless you would longer, which would be better still, and qualify ease? *for the goes every week the same road.* It breakfasts at Henley, and l Chipping Norton; goes early next day to Oxford; stays all day and night, and gets on the third day to London, v from Birmingham, at this season, is *pretty well*, considering long they are at Oxford; and it is much more agreeable country than the Warwick way was."

The rate of the speed of the coach so many years after the p of the 15th Chas. II., must have interfered with the incre: these public conveyances. In the time of George II. new tu acts were passed; but this mode of taxation by tolls, for the of the way, was deemed excessive, and became unpopular obstruction of passage by numerous gates caused riots, to su which, the country people were overawed by the bayonet, an followed bloodshed and executions. Equally unpalatable w act of the same reign, prescribing the size of the wheels of carriages: the liberty to set up gates was abused; the exaction too monstrous to be supported, and continued dissensions ind virtual abandonment of turnpikes; in 1754, nearly a century af passing of the first act, there was no sensible reform of the high and scarcely a turnpike to be seen for 200 miles after leavi vicinity of the metropolis. Loud and general were the compla the difficulties and inconveniences to freeholders and farmers,

legislative attempt to regulate the use of broad wheels, and the limitation of horses used in drawing carriages with narrow wheels. Parliament, in 1759, resolved to limit the weight to be carried by waggons and carts travelling on the turnpike roads, the heavy carriages seriously cutting up the highways; but this modification was unsuccessful, being opposed by the land-owners of Suffolk and Norfolk, on the ground that such a law would render it impossible to bring fresh provisions from those counties to London, as the supply depended absolutely on the quickness of conveyance\*—a curious anomaly, that the greatest weight should be the fastest conveyance; it meant, however, that more carriages would be required. However, the broad-wheeled waggon had its way for a time, destroying the roads, and rendering them dangerous for lighter vehicles; it was a case of goods *versus* passengers; and the legislature seems to have been unable to grapple with the difficulty; so that for years many towns and villages were not to be approached by passenger conveyances: some were even in that condition, that the farmers could not at all times take the produce of the country to market. If the northern and eastern roads would permit of the passage of provision waggons travelling quick, some of the southern great roads and north-western cross roads were not in a condition to admit of the passage of any traffic. An inhabitant of Horsham was living a few years since, who remembered hearing, when a boy, from a person whose father carried on the trade of a butcher in that town, that in his time, the only means of reaching the metropolis was either by going on foot or riding on horseback; the latter of which was not practicable at all periods of the year, nor in every state of the weather: that the roads were not at any time in such a condition as to admit of sheep being driven upon them to the London markets†. So late as 1810, the roads about the present large and beautiful town of Leamington were in a most wretched state, full of ruts; the town itself was compared to 'a dirty duck pond,' and no Stage Coach could get within two miles of the place‡.

\* Smollett's Hist. England.

† Porter's Progress of the Nation.

‡ Charles Knight's Excursions.

Though some of this age of iron roads may indulge in a joke at the expense of the past, credit must be given to the parliament of Charles II., not only for establishing public conveyances, but for beginning to look after the highways; and another great step, affecting the improvement of southern highways, is owing to Geo. IV.'s patronage. The two pleasure-seeking and luxury-loving monarchs gave an extraordinary impetus to the industrial pursuits of the nation by their attention to the modes of transit.

Stages, however, had begun to run; their average speed for a long time was scarcely 4 miles per hour. They run also only by day—night-time being dangerous.

In 1757, the present London City state coach was built, the expenses of which were raised by subscription among the aldermen; it is now the property of the Corporation. Her Majesty's royal state coach was built in 1762, from designs by Sir William Chambers, and was painted by Cipriani. The length is about 24 feet; its weight four tons; about four cwt. more than the City coach. The total expense of the Royal coach was £7,661 17s. 5d.; out of which £1,673 15s. 6d. was paid to the coachmaker, wheelwright, &c.; £2,504 to the carver; £933 14s. 6d. to the gilder; £315 to the painter; £665 to the chaser; £737 10s. 7d. to the lace-man; £385 15s. to the harness maker; £202 5s. 10d. to the mercer; £99 6s. to the bit maker; £107 13s. to the saddler; £30 4s. to the milliner; £4 3s. 6d. to the woollen draper; and £3 9s. 6d. to the cover maker:—Total, £7,661 17s. 5d.

The growth of cities and towns in Geo. III. and Geo. IV.'s reigns, and commercial prosperity after the peace of Paris (1763), had an influence in the reconstruction and repairs of the highways; canals also were cut—road making, improving and mending, filling up ruts and removing obstructions ensued; the stage got forward with its journey; turnpikes were put up—the trusts looked to the profit; it became part of the commercial business of the nation to maintain highways and to travel on them.

The Post had for ages been in the care of the Government, and its profits had been farmed out; and as this nation has always shown that the private enterprise of merchants and tradesmen can go ahead of all governments, when the Coaches came on, competition

occurred between the Post and the Coach. A compound coach and waggon was formed, called a diligence: merchants soon preferred that conveyance, to trusting their communications to the government carriers of letters. Our coaching men did marvels, both in vehicles and speed; they struck consternation into the "Post." Then ensued that contested but remarkable scheme for carrying letters by four-horse conveyances—a revolution in internal transit, which did more to stop violence and robbery, promote civilization, and develop the resources of the country, than all the Acts of Parliament for the last four centuries:—it was

JOHN PALMER'S PLAN  
OF  
MAIL COACHES.

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### THE PACK HORSE.

This mode of conveyance is similar to that by elephants, camels, and dromedaries in Arabia and oriental countries, and by mules in mountainous districts.

(The Litter is similar to the ancient Egyptian Palanquin, the more modern Chinese Palanquin, and the English Sedan.)



### THE ENGLISH WAGGON,

Carrying goods, with a place in the rear for passengers.

Some of these waggons, particularly on the Western roads, were very superior vehicles; they were made for heavy loads, and drawn by from six to eight horses—railways have diminished the number considerably.



### SKETCH OF A GENTLEMAN'S COACH

Used in the early part of the 17th century.

In many country places four oxen were placed in harness for drawing it. The coaches and hackneys of Charles I. and II.'s time were more square—the drivers were equipped with spurs. In the last century the vehicles varied in shape: sometimes they were, says a writer, "like a distiller's vat, somewhat flattened, and being equally balanced between the immense front and back springs; in other cases they resembled a violoncello case, which was, past all comparison, the most fashionable form; and thus they hung in a more genteel posture, viz., inclining on the back springs, and giving to those who sat within the appearance of a stiff Guy Fawkes uneasily seated!!! The coachman and the guard—who always held his carbine, ready-cocked, upon his knees—sat together."

### CARRIAGES OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY;

The body of the wheel similar to the Catherine wheel in architecture.

*(Copied from the Roxburgh MS., written at the latter end of the 14th century, and now in the British Museum).*



Mr. Charles Knight, in his beautiful Pictorial Edition of Shakspeare, gives a copy of the same Illustration.

### LANDAULET;

Travelling Coach in the early part of the present century.



## CHAPTER II.

## MAIL COACHES.

Mr. PALMER's plan of mail coaches was proposed in 1784. It was to abolish the system of carrying letters by boys on horse at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour, and to convey the mail bags from the post-office throughout the country by four-horse coaches. The plan presented an increased speed of 6 miles per hour, and security from robbery on the road.

The following extracts from Mr. Palmer's statement to Mr. William Pitt, will explain how the Government transacted their commercial trade of conveyance at that period.

"The post at present, instead of being the swiftest, is almost the slowest conveyance in this country; and, though, *from the great improvement in our roads*, OTHER CARRIERS HAVE PROPORTIONATELY MENDED THEIR SPEED, *the post is as slow as ever*. It is likewise very unsafe, as the frequent robberies of it testify; and to avoid a loss of this nature, people generally cut bank bills, or bills at sight, in two, and send the parts by different posts. The Post Master General lately advertised directions to the public how to divide a bill in such a manner as to prevent its being of any use to the robber. Rewards have also been frequently offered to him for the best constructed mail cart, on some plan to prevent the frequent robbery of the mail, but without effect. Indeed, it is at present *generally entrusted to some idle boy, without character mounted on a worn-out hack*, and who, so far from being able to defend himself, or escape from a robber, is much more likely to be in league with him\*."

The existence of such a state of things as this, little more than

\* Memorial of John Palmer, Esq.

sixty years ago, is a fact which it strains one's faith of imagination to believe or understand. Yet, notwithstanding all this social barbarism, for so we may truly call it, the common coaches or diligences, as they appear to have been designated (belonging to commercial men), had already made a considerable advance to the admirable system of speed and punctuality which they afterwards attained, and which, now that a still more rapid mode of locomotion has almost everywhere been substituted, we may venture to describe as the perfection of horse travelling on common roads\*.

Palmer had great opportunities of checking the rate of postal and coaching transit. He resided at Bath, then at the summit of its popularity, where, amongst the higher classes, the slow speed, both in travelling and the delivery of letters, became severely felt.

Palmer therefore took Bath for example; and he states that the diligence which in 1783 left Bath at four or five o'clock on Monday afternoon, would deliver a letter in London about ten on Tuesday morning. The post, however, that left Bath at ten or eleven on Monday night, did not at this time deliver its letters in London till two or three on Wednesday afternoon, and frequently not till much later. The only advantage of the post was its greater cheapness: the postage of a letter from Bath to London was only four-pence, whereas booking, carriage and portage made the charge by the diligence amount to about two shillings; nevertheless, says Palmer, "many persons, both at Bath and Bristol, send by the latter; and, indeed, throughout the kingdom, *every letter to which expedition is necessary is now sent by diligences*, where they are established." Diligences, it is added, were now established from almost every town in the kingdom to London, and also between many of the principal towns, as from Bath and Bristol to Birmingham, Liverpool, Chester, Oxford, Exeter, Plymouth, Portsmouth, &c.

It is wonderful to reflect what has been done in less than three quarters of a century. With such a state of things before them, we can scarcely suppose the then Government, in its trade as carriers

\* Craik's History of British Commerce.

of letters, would tolerate travelling at the rate of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour, when commercial men were rivalling them at nearly double the speed. It is more difficult to understand that a committee of the House of Commons should place such reliance upon the post-office officials' judgment and experience, treat the experiment with contempt, and report against Palmer's plan as being "totally impracticable." Indeed we find the principal man in the post-office department coming forward with what was termed a piece of argumentation, and triumphantly exposing Palmer's scheme, by a supposition of "*an impossibility*," which was, that the Bath mail *could not* be brought to London in sixteen or eighteen hours\*.

After experiments, and a struggle of two years, Palmer's Mail Coaches were positively adopted by the Government and sent upon the road, to the discomfiture of the laggard Post-officials, notorious for opposing Palmer's change in 1784, and Rowland Hill's plan in 1839. With what dismay must the officials have viewed the *innovation*; how they must have trembled for their prophetic forebodings of impracticabilities and impossibilities!

"Alas! that the warning was in vain;—that innovation was attempted;—that the sober cart and quiet pad *were* exchanged for the headlong mail coach;—that the convenient range of from one to three in the morning was exchanged for the unseasonable hour of eight in the evening, with a stern limitation to a minute. Alas! for the heedless hurry;—alas! for the useless guard;—the vain resistance to robbers;—the universal confusion that has prevailed;—the deplorable injury to the revenue;—and the *wanton overthrow of a perfect system*; \* \* \* who stood god-father to the vile abortion? \* \* \* his name was—WILLIAM PITT†."

The carrying of valuables by the old wretched post system, was a kind of premium to the highwayman, who, lurking after the post boy, fell in with horsemen and stages. Thus a fear to travel became universal. In a few years after the establishment of mails, there was a greater increase of coaches—an

\* Post-office Reform, by Rowland Hill, Esq., now Secretary to the General Post Office.

† Rowland Hill.

impetus was given to travelling—men went without fear—swift and numerous conveyances defied the solitary highwayman: the guards and coachmen were armed; and the remnant of the Turpin and Clifford class disappeared. Very few robberies indeed took place of stages and mails—such a thing as an actual stoppage and plunder of a mail, we believe, never did take place; and in the solitary cases of public coach robberies that occurred, some of the parties identified with the coach on the road or at one of the ends, were in league with the thieves.

All the marvellous and thrilling tales in romances and novels of the heroism (!) of Turpin and other highwaymen, in stopping and plundering mails, have their sole foundation in that despicable taste which converts murderers into heroes at the expense of truth, to feed a morbid appetite for adventures. For instance, Turpin was hung at York in 1739, half a century before mails were established, and the *gentlemen* highwaymen, the Cliffords, Duvals, and the Wilds, &c., &c., ceased to exist also before that era in locomotion.

For some years after Palmer's plan the mails did not attain a speed exceeding 6 miles per hour. The first vehicles were, in comparison with modern carriages, somewhat cumbrous, the effect principally of revenue regulations in taxing the passenger trade: they carried six passengers inside. An alteration in the taxation having taken place, the mails and stages were built of lighter construction, and to carry only four inside passengers. Mails then attained a speed of 8 miles per hour; but at the same time the stages were getting ahead to an average speed of 10 miles, and even to 12 miles—some of the mails increased their speed, but not to the same extent; the stages under private enterprise had the additional *prestige* of obtaining the start.

In the year of Palmer's plan, 1784, George IV., when Prince of Wales, began the erection of the Pavilion at Brighton, which had the twofold influence of transforming the ancient small fishing town of Brighthelmstone into the palatial Brighton, and reforming the whole of the southern and south-western roads; 35 years after, 70 coaches daily visited and left Brighton; and the highways near Horsham, instead of being impassable for man or beast,

afforded sound footing for the daily traffic of heavily-laden stages and waggons.

In the present century road making was studied as an engineering science: witness the efforts of Telford on the Holyhead road, James Walker on the Blackwall, and those of McNeil, McAdam and others. The first effort of George Stephenson on the Darlington line, and the commencement of the Liverpool and Manchester railway, are events of Geo. IV.'s life. In his time there arose the two greatest improvements in locomotion—Palmer's Mail Coaches, and Trevithick and Stephenson's Locomotive Engines.

We now approach 1835—a date identified with the period when the scientific power of steam stepped in to carry our masses by tens of thousands per diem; when horse locomotion by public stage had reached its highest point of excellence. From the period of 'social barbarism' in 1784, stages had risen, despite the burthens of heavy taxation, until they had become the perfection of horse travelling on common roads. *It has taken not quite 20 years to nearly extinguish them.*

#### POSTSCRIPT.

John Palmer, Esq., to whose zeal and perseverance we owe the Mail Coach, was born in Bath, and for several years represented his native city in Parliament; he interested himself to procure the first patent for the Theatre there. Mr. Palmer travelled much and corresponded much. He was one of those whose active minds were opposed to dilatoriness, and wished the age to advance with enterprise and ingenuity. He could not put up with a barbarously sluggish coach; he considered that if he was inconvenienced by the existing order of things, the country suffered to a larger extent, and he applied himself to suggest a remedy; and having formed the scheme, he collected data, laid his plan, with the confirmatory evidence, before the Right Hon. Wm. Pitt in 1784, and through whose patronage it was finally tested, and with success.

Palmer was appointed by that great statesman to superintend the reforms, with the position of Surveyor and Comptroller-General of the Post-office, at a salary of £1500 per year, and an allowance of £2 10s. per cent. on the future increase of the revenue. He "at the outset of his arduous undertaking, procured the conveyance of the mails at £20,000 a-year less than he proposed and government contracted for," a proof of his energy and application to his object. In consequence of disagreements with the superior authorities Palmer left the Post-office, and his services formed the subject of Parliamentary inquiries. It appears by one of the returns, that from 1794 to 1813, twenty years, the net increase of the Post-office revenue was £5,766,804 1s. 7d., owing to the adoption of this reform, that Palmer had been paid £59,250, reducing his claim to £84,920 1s. 6d.† It is unnecessary to trace the proceedings further than the result, which was, that the latter matter merged into a composition grant of

\* Parliamentary Returns.

† Parliamentary Paper, 1813.

£50,000—but if the delay in awarding full justice was not very creditable to some of the then existing authorities, it is gratifying to find, that though a committee, in 1784, pronounced his reforms impracticable, a second committee, in 1788, testified to “his integrity, activity and zeal in creating a public revenue, exclusive of the numerous advantages accruing to the public and commerce\*,” and that a third committee, in 1807, concurred in the expression of such sentiments, adding that Mr. Palmer “had met with very great difficulties in the progress of his plan, in consequence of a determined and continued opposition from the Post-office, the most experienced officers in that department having declared the plan, previous to its execution, to be impracticable, and injurious to commerce and the revenue†.”

The Parliamentary grant is a tribute establishing the vast amount of benefit the plan of Mail Coaches conferred upon the country. The late General Palmer, who was also many years M.P. for Bath, was the son of John Palmer, the Reformer of Horse Locomotives.

\* Parliamentary Report.

† Report, 1817.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE AGE OF COACHES AND COACHING.

IN the twenty years of peace, from 1815 to 1835, the horse locomotives—mails and stages—rapidly attained their epoch; nor were the highways behind: turnpike roads had been extended and improved—there were also good and secure local roadways for the immense traffic which daily traversed the kingdom. Coach building and all the incipient trade branches connected with this business were in a flourishing state; and confidence having been acquired in the safety of the internal transit, travellers had ceased to call in the lawyer to make their wills, before they left their homes for a 50-mile journey.

In the words stage carriages, are included all descriptions of internal conveyances drawn by one or more horses—whether mails, stage coaches, omnibuses, or vans—which travel at a rate exceeding 4 miles per hour, and ply for hire at separate fares for passengers, and take up and set down travellers at specified points. If the vehicles travel under 4 miles, they are not stage carriages—for liberty to increase that minimum rate of speed, and become the privileged class, they are made to pay a considerable sum annually in licences and duties, more particularly referred to in subsequent pages.

So enterprising were their habits, that the commercial carriers were again surpassing the post, not only in expedition but in cheapness—and what was more, in yielding a revenue—the transit of passengers and goods had gone ahead of that of the communication of thought.

Mr. Rowland Hill's calculation is, that the stage coach duties had increased, from 1815 to 1835, 128 *per cent.*, whilst the post-office income was comparatively stationary\*.

In 1815 the public taxes in yearly licences, in passenger taxes (or mileage duties), amounted to £217,671; in 1835 they had netted £498,497.

Twenty years after, came a startling decline of these conveyances.

In 1854 the public taxes on country stages had shrunk to £73,000.

To return to 1835. The extent of the coaching business at this period, and the value of the property, must, even in these days of railroads, excite wonder. In many towns now without a solitary coach, 1000 to 2000 horses were kept. Stabling commanded high rentals, and hotels unprecedented premiums.

Mr. William Chaplin, Mr. B. W. Horne, Mr. Edward Sherman, and Mr. John Nelson—all of whom are now interested in the trade—coached at this period to an amazing extent. Mr. Chaplin, who was proprietor of two London Hotels (and it may now be added, M.P. for Salisbury, and present chairman of the South Western Railway, the projectors of which, years ago, had to be guided by his experience and ability, ere they could make head in their undertaking, and whose name, whilst it figures in that position, is still retained on coaches and London omnibuses as a stage carriage proprietor), and the occupier of five yards: the Spread Eagle and Cross Keys, Gracechurch Street; the Swan with two Necks, Lad Lane; the White Horse, Fetter Lane; and the Angel, St. Clements, Strand; he had no less than 1300 horses at work in coaches on different roads. Messrs. Horne and Sherman, the two next largest coach proprietors in London, had about 700 horses each. Mr. John Nelson, of the Bull Inn, Aldgate, and the Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, and the present proprietor of the Wellington (Oxford Street) omnibuses, was connected with numerous coaches on various roads.

Those who have not witnessed it, might, perhaps, be still more astonished at the regularity and ease with which these prodigious,

\* Post-office Reform.

apparently overwhelming establishments, are conducted, by the means of foremen, and clever subordinates well trained to their business\*.

The amounts these firms paid to the government annually for licences and duties, will almost excite incredulity. Mr. B. W. Horne, in his evidence before the Committee in 1837, deposed that in the previous year, 1836, he had paid no less than £26,717 5s. 6d. for licences and duties on the travelling of his coaches, a sum equal to one-third of the whole present income of the country from that source. Mr. Chaplin's. and Messrs. Sherman and Nelson's contribution to the impost, was of a corresponding extent. In the provinces too, the coachmasters contributed largely to the revenue. Mr. Robert Gray, a proprietor of the Western district, paying £7000 per annum: whilst Mr. W. C. Wimberley, of Doncaster, paid for the taxes on the Wellington coach alone in one year (four coaches being used, and the travelling being successively up and down) £2,568 18s. 6d. for 365 days travelling!

In the coach building trade—a trade we hope to see revived, for the English coach builders excel all other makers—many thousand smiths, wheelwrights, painters and artisans were employed. The harness makers, saddlers, and whipmakers also must not be overlooked. The number of horses which were used in coaching exceeded 150,000. The coachmen, guards, store-keepers, ostlers, clerks at booking offices, porters, assistants, &c. numbered upwards of 30,000 persons. The value of the coach property, harness, stabling and horses, was upwards of three millions of money—all swept away by the progress of steam!

No definite figures as to such details have been collected, but we have stated the above on the authority of parties who were engaged in the business at the period, and reliance may be placed that they approach to as near the truth as it is possible now to estimate the past business.

The number of stages and mails, however, has been greatly exaggerated—some writers have approached to the figure of 25,000 vehicles, whereas they never attained the number of 4000; the

\* The road by Nimrod.

number of mails was about 700, the rest were stage coaches ; and the weekly mileage was a million and a quarter miles. Each day thirty coaches went out of London to Brighton, and as many came in ; two hundred passed through Hounslow, beside hundreds through Barnet, Croydon, Epping, &c.

Every year, from 1799 to 1835, on the King's birthday, His Majesty's Mails, newly painted and fresh varnished, with coachmen and guards in new liveries mounted outside, with their wives, children and relatives inside, were paraded through the main arteries of the metropolis, from the General Post-office to the residence of the Postmaster General.

It is not because we feel any veneration for tinsel and pomp that we regret the loss of mail coach processions ; but we think, as the agents and pioneers of commercial and social progress, they must have produced a moral effect, calculated to give an impetus to the spirit of improvement in those times. The coach had grown in the days of peace—its errand was peace, and it sowed good will ; and when men in after ages trace the route of a railway line and that of a Roman road, they will perhaps be wont to draw a comparison of the moral effects of the two, and the advancing spirit of mankind in different centuries.

"In this country, the best Stage Coaches were very perfect machines, and the arrangements by which they were conducted, when the number of persons and animals that were engaged in them is considered, were extremely complete. \* \* \* \* \* Upon the Continent, travelling in public carriages was never so rapid or so commodious as in England. In France the diligences were, and those which still exist are, clumsy carriages, generally consisting of three bodies, and are drawn by five or six horses, usually driven by one postillion from his saddle\*."

"Nothing can be better suited, both for service and safety, than our Stage Coaches, the load from the boot being let down low between the wheels, to keep the coach steady when travelling fast ; the axles are made of the best iron, and are (at least those of the well-appointed coaches) proved every week ; that is to say, hung

\* Knight's Cyclopædia.

up and struck, to see if there is any flaw in them, and the wheels are secured by having either the patent box or long bolts: without either one or the other no coach should travel\*."

At the same time as they attained their point of excellence, the greatest noblemen in the kingdom vied with each other in introducing mail coaches into their establishments. A private mail coach became the most aristocratic turn-out of the day. In Hyde Park and at "the corner," the wealthiest in the land might be seen on the coachman's box, driving teams of matchless blood horses. Aristocracy even patronized the coach box as drivers of stages. Sir St. Vincent Cotton drove the 'Age' Brighton Coach, Mr. Willan the 'Magnet,' Sir Thomas Tyrwhit Jones the 'Pearl,' Mr. Bliss the 'Mazeppa,' and Captain Probin the 'Reading,' all renowned for their whips and fast coaches, doing their  $10\frac{1}{2}$  and 11 miles per hour. There were also, the 'Hiron Delle,' which ran between Cheltenham and Liverpool, 133 miles, in  $12\frac{1}{2}$  hours; the 'Owen Glendower' between Birmingham and Aberystwith, a very hilly country, at the rate of  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour; two coaches, the 'Phenomenon' and the 'Blue,' ran between London and Norwich at a rate of 12 miles per hour, doing 112 miles in  $9\frac{1}{4}$  hours; the 'Quicksilver' and the 'Shrewsbury Wonder,' were also famous fast coaches; and the 'Manchester Telegraph,' ran 13 miles per hour, including stoppages.

\* Nimrod in Sporting Magazine.

## CHAPTER IV.

## COACH FARES AND RAILWAY FARES.

FOR want of correct information on the subject of taxes levied upon horse travelling, many unjust conclusions are drawn against the coaching trade. Sir Francis Head, in his instructive book, "Stokers and Pokers," speaks of the vast benefits to the public of the rail over the coach, and draws a moral founded on a comparison of fares. He quotes, for example, the Stage Coach Fares to Liverpool in 1835, and the Rail in 1849, a difference of fourteen years. The comparison in dates itself is not equitable; the moral is founded on receipts, showing a result in favour of the rail of 100 per cent.; they are naked figures. By considering the question in its trade light, that is, as one of earnings or profits, a far different view is obtained: for instance, the coach fares in 1835, stated by Sir F. Head, are, *outside* £2 5s.\*; the rail, second class, £1 7s. Now, the tax in 1835 on the road conveyances was equal to one-fifth of the receipts, that on the rail 5 per cent. on receipts: the earnings by the stage coach master was £1 16s., by the railway company £1 5s. 8d., which does not give cause for exultation after FOURTEEN YEARS, and the expenditure of many millions. By taking the dates a little near, but allowing even eight years to the railway, the figures are, the outside coach fare to Liverpool in 1835, received by the proprietor, £1 16s.; Bradshaw's Tables give the

\* Some coaches ran to Liverpool indeed at this period charging only 30s. outside; thus Sir F. Head must have taken the fare of a high priced coach; if he had given 30s. the comparison would have been very much against him in the naked figures.

The evidence given before the House of Commons in 1837, proves that at that time the coach fares from London to Newcastle, 274 miles, was, inside, £4 10s.; outside, £2 5s., with road expenses. From London to York, 199 miles, inside, £3 5s., outside, £1 14s.

second class trains in 1843 at £1 18s.; deduct 5 per cent. tax, and the result is £1 16s., so that the earnings by rail were the same as the coach.

On the Great North Road, while the coaches were unopposed, the fare, including the tax, to Stilton (75 miles) was 16s. outside, whilst the fares from London to Crick (75 miles) was by open carriages in the second class 13s. 6d., the earnings of both powers being the same within a farthing!

Again, Sir F. Head, in drawing his comparison, after 14 years, lost sight of the pecuniary advantages gained by the rail in that period. There is this consideration, which must have been felt by railway shareholders, that before the age of branch lines, and when the railway authorities followed the maxim of doing business for a profit, if possible, the railway dividends were such as to make the investments in steam highly desirable; and they obtained profits from charging fares approximating to the coaching scale of prices. The rate was 3d. per mile for first class, and 2d. for the second class\*.

When unprofitable branch lines were made, and the fares were reduced, the millions of passengers can testify they received great benefits; and there is great praise for the self-sacrifice of shareholders for submitting to minimum dividends, in the laudable object of carrying the masses economically, as well as expeditiously.

Steam destroyed the horse by SPEED. Fares were not reduced till the coaches were nigh extinguished. What the moral might be

\* Great Western fares to Bristol, 118 miles: first class, £1 10s.—second class, £1. 1s.

London and Birmingham; to Birmingham, 112 miles: first class, £1 10s.—second class, £1. 1s.

South Western; to Southampton, 77 miles: first class. £1 1s.—second class, 14s.

These fares are taken from Bradshaw's Tables, January 1843, and in these three great lines show a rate exceeding 3d. per mile, first class, and 2d., second class. The fares from Manchester and Leeds are stated in the same tables thus: "first class, 3d. per mile, and second class, 2d. per mile." The coach fare (as stated by Sir F. Head) of 45s. for the 210 miles to Liverpool, is a fraction more than 2½d. per mile; by taking the figures less the tax, the average rate of charge by the rail in 1843 will be found the same as the coach eight years previously.

were we to speculate on the energy of men in raising the transit of the country to such an amount in the short space of twenty years, we leave others to propound. Shackled throughout its career, in its inception, in its growth, and in its maturity, by the most offensive of all shackles—Taxation, the coaching trade did marvels; and no comparison of fares can destroy the good it has done the country.

The coach proprietors could not move without being subject to a—*Tax*; their Horses were—*Taxed*; their Carriages were—*Taxed*; the Furniture (harness, whips, &c.) was—*Taxed*; their Coachmen and Guards were—*Taxed*; their Roadway was—*Taxed*; their Speed was—*Taxed*; they could not turn a wheel without a *Tax*.

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## CHAPTER V.

## THE DECLINE OF COACHES.

THE CAUSE—FISCAL ERRORS—EXCESSIVE AND UNEQUAL TAXATION  
—THE REMEDY—EQUALITY IN TAXATION, OR ABOLITION OF  
ALL PASSENGER TAXES.

WE have now to trace the fiscal error which placed the stages on an unjust, unequal and anomalous position in comparison with their powerful antagonist—steam. About 1835 transit by steam vessels, which has always been free from tax, was growing rapidly ; and no sooner had portions of some of the railway lines opened, than it was seen the coaching trade must, under the then financial regulation between steam and rail by land and steam by water, go. The taxation on land travelling, at even this premature period of railroads, according to the statement of Mr. Richard Smith, the Government Assessor of Duties, was by railway the eighth of a penny per mile, on stages one farthing ; but, Mr. Smith adds, the number of passengers charged on railways *was according to the actual number carried*, while on stages the number of passengers *was according to the number specified in the annual licence*\*. Mr. Horne, of the firm of Chaplin and Horne, says, that the duties paid were, upon coaches licensed for 18 passengers,  $3\frac{1}{2}d.$  per mile, every mile the wheel ran. Such a state of things, it was contended, could not last long, and the complaints of the trade, before the utter extinction of coaches, induced efforts to place both steam and horses upon an equality of taxation ; and the late Sir R. Peel, Bart., M.P., in the House of Commons, advised that horse power should have equal advantages—that there should be “no inequality of taxation.”

\* *Vide* Committee's Report.

In 1837 a parliamentary inquiry took place. The committee advised the total removal of all taxes on land travelling, to destroy the then existing inequality. This report and the evidence, as it affects the existing state of matters, is given in its place. It will be observed that the committee strongly pointed out the dangers of unequal taxation, and the benefits which would ensue to the population if all transit was free.

Unfortunately, neither the committee's report nor Sir Robert Peel's advice was acted upon; and the old system, being found to produce so good an income, was continued under a modified price on the coaches, while the rail had, what has resulted in, a more favourable mode of tax; but steam by water escaped taxation altogether! Had all been placed under an equal and analogous plan, much evil might have been prevented, both to the trader and the public. From 1837 to 1842 no substantial alteration was effected: but steam vessels were progressing; and as the Great Western, London, Birmingham, and other great lines opened, the room of the coaches rapidly approached.

In 1842 a new assessment took place; and in that year was passed the act which now regulates the Stage Carriage Duty—the coach tax being still fixed on a mileage—but reduced to three pence per mile, and the railway tax directed to be levied *on fares received*, at the rate of 5 per cent., the boat being free!

The old mileage duties being still levied on the “turn of the wheel,” whether the vehicle was full or empty, the mischief was, at the coach master, if he ran, *must have run* for the profit of the government, if he made a loss himself. In this consists the fiscal evil, which has been the source of so much injustice to country towns, the inhabitants of which have, by the rail taking long stages off, on cross roads, been cut off from short rides to and from country towns.

The times and circumstances have altered since 1843; and as the rail, and even boat fares, have influence on the coach fare, the duty, which was calculated as a 5 per cent. taxation, increased proportion as the coach fares became reduced. We apologise for enlarging at such length on this subject; but it was to this happy fiscal error of 1842, that the government itself owes the

following results of duty, illustrating the rapid decay of the coach trade :—

Duty paid by Stage Coaches in 1835 . . . . .					£498,497	
Paid in 1850 (English Country Revenue) Mileage* . . .					£70,231	
"	"	"	"	"	Licences† . . .	6,614
						76,845
"	1851	"	"	"	Mileage . . . .	68,642
"	"	"	"	"	Licences . . . .	6,604
						75,246
"	1852	"	"	"	Mileage . . . .	66,938
"	"	"	"	"	Licences . . . .	6,380
						73,318
"	1853	"	"	"	Mileage . . . .	67,224
"	"	"	"	"	Licences . . . .	6,679
						73,903
"	1854	"	"	"	Mileage . . . .	67,224
"	"	"	"	"	Licences . . . .	6,679
						73,903

Stages can no longer be our great carriers—they must become feeders to the greater stream ; speaking generally, branch lines of conveyance : they are unquestionably of vital importance still, in districts where the rail cannot go, and more especially as “the railways of these kingdoms lead not to marts of commerce alone ; they take us amongst mountains and lakes, the margin of the broad sea, and the banks of the smiling rivers. It is for the humblest children of nature that we especially rejoice when earth’s fairest scenes are for the first time opened to their eye by the marvellous inventions of the age†.” Yet, how is it when we have been carried some 50, 70 or 100 miles by a cheap train per rail, and we have some lovely spots of interest and beauty to seek, six or ten miles off ? we cannot get to the other side of the mountain, or be dropped in the midst of one of “earth’s fairest scenes” by steam—invariably we find the want of a local conveyance ; and then, if we will be carried, we must pay as much for travelling six or ten miles by road, as we do the whole distance of 100 miles by rail.

Coaches and omnibuses are valuable aids to the comfort and

\* The gross Mileage Duty of Three Half-pence per mile.

† The Yearly Licence of £3 3s. per Carriage (in addition to the Mileage) generally taken out in October for the current year.

‡ Charles Knight.

convenience of the railway passenger, in carrying persons as well as luggage, and they must be assistants to the rail, particularly in the case of excursions; and if the rail had coaches and omnibuses to local distances at corresponding fares with the rail, tens of thousands more would travel, and a reduction of coach fares would lead to an increase of passengers on the main line. From the representation of the present coach masters to the House of Commons, it appears practicable that passengers can be conveyed by land between short points at the same price as parliamentary trains; and all government has to do is to test it, by granting the same exemption in favour of the road at those fares as is granted to the rail. The question, how are the coaches to be revived, is not so very difficult to solve, when we look at the question of taxation: remove that, and the coaching interest will be revived, like the Phoenix, from its ashes.

The present age is one of progress. We are perplexed and paralyzed on hearing of prohibitive taxes: we know taxes which bear unequally have that effect—we want to go ahead. We hear of the Americans travelling by their vast omnibuses at cheap fares, and why should not the masses in England and Scotland travel—and travel without an incubus? We make the inquiry in London; we make it in Bath, in Liverpool, in Glasgow, in Edinburgh; from Cornwall to Caithness. We hear the proprietors say, “we are Taxed!” We say, even Ireland is before you! the reply comes, “It is so; but look at the tax in Ireland, £8 a-year, and we pay in Great Britain £60 per annum average for each vehicle!” We hear also that alongside the London omnibuses—on the Thames—by the side of the Glasgow buses, on the Clyde, the steam vessel acts in competition, carrying passengers without tax, while the horse is so grievously burthened. Is that just?

We are impressed therefore with this fact, that it is essential to the wants of the public that the stage carriage trade must be revived, and omnibuses and coaches become branches to and from the greater road—the rail: for long distances, it is fair to assume they will be failures, if their route be alongside the rail. Steam goes fifty miles per hour, the horse at eight!

## CHAPTER VI.

AS TO INCREASE IN SUPPLY OF PUBLIC CONVEYANCES, AND  
IMPROVEMENTS.

THE number of passengers carried by coaches has been varied at different times. The number licensed in 1837 was 18 persons each coach—the average number each carried was 10. The first long coaches, and those called ‘diligences,’ were very cumbersome; both were superseded by what were called the ‘old heavies,’ carrying six inside and twelve out; and they, in their turn, were displaced by the four inside and twelve out, the present stage coach, which is considered by competent judges the best passenger vehicle that can possibly be built for stage work, that is, for any distance exceeding fifteen miles, combining the greatest amount of accommodation in the most compact form: they are lighter in weight, and can carry more luggage than any other conveyance. Stages and omnibuses are now allowed, by 5 and 6 Vic., cap. 79, sec. 13, to carry as many as the carriage will contain upon “fit and proper seats,” allowing 16 inches for each passenger, either inside or outside; and the quantity of passenger space regulates the tariff of fares.

The heaviest drawback upon progress, whether commercial or social, is the influence created by bad legislation and excessive taxation: the system of stage tax, as at present levied, is a tax against public progress. When one duty was imposed, the stage had to be made to carry six inside passengers; when that fiscal regulation was removed, a better build of coaches ensued, and the rate of speed was increased, first 25 and then even 100 per cent. from 6 to 12 miles per hour. We must remove the present tax against progression, and improvements will follow.

In further considering such a subject, reference must be had to the number of passengers a district will supply, the width, quality

and gradients of the road and of the country, &c., and the vicinity of railway stations and of neighbouring towns. When the country is level and the roads wide, the size of the carriage can be adapted accordingly: there must be an engineer for a line of railway and one for a highway; and there must be an architect for a coach as well as for a house or a ship—and he is required to possess invention and originality, as well as knowledge of geometrical forms\*. The coach builder will build his coach for the particular road, as much as the ship-builder for a river; and the coachmaster select his horses for the draught, the same as the engineer his engine for a specific current or depth of water. A machine applying to the north of England may not be useful in the south, no more than the ferry boats of the Clyde will do for the transit between the London bridges. No arbitrary regulations, therefore, on any of these points should be desired; we must rely more upon the tact and experience of practical men to assist us in the case of improvements in public carriages.

On many country roads their width and level permit of three and four-horse vehicles, conveying 40 passengers; in towns, smaller vehicles are advisable, because of the local traffic. It may be assumed practicable to have the increased size in the majority of cases, because country roads would not be blocked, like town streets, by a large carriage. The remunerative profit, supposing there is no tax, may be taken at the rate of 9d. for two horses, and  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per mile for three or four horses, a calculation exceedingly moderate, which will include the wages of the coachman and guard, or conductor—it is not possible to place a less price: the  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 9d. is not what the *passenger is to pay*, but what the carriage is to *earn in gross*—to embrace all liabilities and contingencies—in other respects, an average price upon the general working, allowing for bad weather and deficient return journey. Estimating this as to a two-horse omnibus—

On a journey of 8 miles, result as for earnings	s.	d.
20 passengers, to return gross, must pay each about $7\frac{1}{2}$ d.	12	0
or cost to owner of travelling about parliamentary fares price.	12	6

\* Dodd on British Manufactures.

Now, to apply the same scale to the four-horse omnibus, containing 40 passengers—

Four horses 8 miles, 2s. 6d. per mile . . . . .	£1 0
40 passengers at 6d. each . . . . .	1 0

Showing how much cheaper the larger number can be carried than the smaller. The cost of travelling will be three farthings per mile. There are circumstances connected with many localities such as the draught of the roads, rents of stabling, and cost in tolls, &c. which may sensibly increase or decrease this estimate. Upon the principle here suggested, a shilling fare for a journey of about 12 miles would be adequate for conveyance by such improved and untaxed vehicles. The estimate is not much out of the calculation of the coach trade itself, for it will be seen, by reference to the appendix, that the proprietors' calculation is, that by their present vehicles they can (if untaxed) carry at 1d. per mile.

So far, it seems reasonable to expect that, under better financial arrangements and with other carriages, the public would, in all parts of the kingdom, derive vast benefits. Let the following illustrate how the country traffic is now affected. The large town of Preston with a population of 80,000, is without a solitary stage or omnibus, and the whole district of country east of the railway from Preston to Penrith is totally without any public conveyance to and from the railway. A gentleman writing from that part, says, 'It is truly distressing to be at these railway stations unaccommodated by public conveyances, and see poor people with their luggage what shifts they are put to to get a few miles into the interior of the country: perhaps they get a lift by a carrier, but he only passes once a week. I have seen these country people walking as many as twelve miles to their homes; I have met females carrying children leaving their boxes behind them, to be fetched by a friendly cart on their return waggon: I know of even worse cases, one of which I will name, to show how the labourers and working men are put to it in these parts to travel. There is a school at Ayton, near Stockport belonging to the Society of Friends; it is 50 miles from this place. A working man living near me, who had his daughter at the school, wished to fetch her this year: there was no conveyance whatever for him, so he walked the whole 50 miles, and had to come w

his child by railway *via* Newcastle and Carlisle, a distance of 160 miles, entailing a very heavy expense for a poor man. These things can only be described by those who have seen them; but to the owner of a carriage, or one who is able to write for a post-chaise to meet him at the railway station, the misery of these wants of the poor are unknown." A volume could be easily filled up with complaints like these; but the preceding statement, which the writer vouches for the accuracy of, will be sufficient to demonstrate the evils of the present system. One case, however, which has occurred since the preceding was written, may be given. "In the latter part of this November (1854), a miner's wife, with child in arms, arrived, wishing to go to Conistone, 12 miles hence. She had come from Liverpool, 84 miles, by rail, for 7s., but the poor woman could not ride to Conistone, 12 miles, for less than 12s., by a one-horse fly. This woman, therefore, started off in the snow, to walk the 12 miles, with her child!"

The carriages now in existence may thus be classed: the Stage Coach, drawn by two or four horses, carrying 4 inside and 12 outside—total, 16 passengers; the narrow guage Omnibus (London), drawn by two horses abreast, 12 inside and 9 outside—total, 21 passengers; the broad guage Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and Edinburgh class of Omnibuses, with about 40 passengers, drawn by three horses abreast, sometimes requiring extra cattle.



## CHAPTER VII.

## LONDON OMNIBUSES.

IMPROVEMENTS—UNEQUAL LAWS—POLICE SUPERVISION—THE  
RIGHT OF APPEAL.

THE present omnibuses used in the metropolitan district round London, are an adaptation, or, more properly, an improved adaptation of a very old description of conveyance which was used in the last century, and called "a Crab Coach."

It is in the recollection of coach masters who have furnished information for these pages, that many years ago vehicles of an almost similar principle in construction to the narrow guage omnibus were in use, and superseded by the old "heavies," carrying six inside and twelve outside seats. The vehicles first styled "Omnibuses" (a Latin word "for all")—a name the existing metropolitan retains—were imported from Paris, and used in London some twenty-five years ago. Many short stages ran in and out of London to the suburbs, prior to the introduction of these conveyances. Indeed, just anterior to the "Omnibus" coming from France, the idea of a new carriage, on the omnibus principle, had been originated, and a specimen was worked for some short time as an experiment. The various descriptions gave rise to our builders making a compound conveyance, suitable for short distances. The opinion then entertained, and which still exists, being, that stage coaches are the best vehicles for distances over 12 miles. The omnibus may be termed a short stage public conveyance, as the stage and mail coach is considered the vehicle for a long distance.

The Parisian models, or broad guage omnibuses, which were used

London, were a complete failure; they killed the horses, they were cumbersome and unwieldy in the extreme, and in speed could not approach the improved carriage; they had no patronage, because they were cheaper than the old hackney carriage; but it was not until the London coach builder had made a vehicle for the narrow streets, that omnibuses became at all numerous. With all its imperfections as to height and width, before the narrow carriage make is condemned for not giving as much head and free room as the Glasgow or present Paris build, the dimensions of London streets should be looked to. The coach architect, like the steam-boat engineer, has to consult his load, stream, road and crowded thoroughfares; three-abreast or four-horse vehicles, could not be tolerated here: nine-tenths of the vehicles have to find entrance into the City, and *there* is the difficulty for large carriages. Were all the omnibus stations at such spacious places as Finsbury Circus, the Marble Arch, the Elephant and Castle, or the Angel, it would make a difference—but the central transit exceeds by a great ratio that in the outlying districts, and travellers would not yield to change of vehicles—they require to be carried right on to their destination in the city in the same carriage, and thus the Holloway or Maida Hill omnibuses have to be adapted to the City. Three or four broad Glasgow omnibuses, with their three-abreast horses, requiring for the wheels a width of roadway of 7 feet, would, if they ran into the City, cause a blockade in a few hours; two could not pass each other through Temple Bar—in the Poultry, and at the corner of St. Paul's, they would not permit another vehicle to pass between them—in Newgate Street there would scarcely be safety space for one Hansom's cab between; and some idea may be formed of the effect on the north and south side of London Bridge by placing Pickford's vans, with three horses abreast, on the bridge—the consequence to the traffic would be the same, as wherever a stoppage occurred, in Fleet Street or London Bridge, the coaches, cabs, carts, &c. for a mile distant would be delayed. If the streets were of a width to give a clear roadway of 40 feet, to allow for Pickford's vans, brewers' drays, carters' vans, Clarences, and Hansom cabs, the practicability of having broad

guage or double-sized omnibuses, like the Parisian, Glasgow, and Manchester, might be tested with fairness; even an expansion of width of the present vehicle 6 inches would be attended with considerable inconvenience to the other City vehicle traffic; the object therefore to be studied, is to build a carriage to combine lightness, with the least possible burden, for two horses; as before observed, the experiment of setting them down at distant places, to find room in other vehicles, would not be yielded by the passenger. It may, under such circumstances, be stated that:—

THE ONLY PUBLIC OMNIBUS FOR THE LONDON STREETS, with transit through the City, is a TWO HORSE CARRIAGE, AND IT CANNOT BE WIDER THAN TWO HORSES CAN DRAW; and we, for distinction, call the two-horse vehicle the narrow guage omnibus, and the three-horse the broad guage omnibus.

This may be taken, under the circumstances, as a practical view: the question then is, how are vehicles to be constructed so as to give increased height and increased width to the passenger, without diminishing his comfort, by decreasing the length of his seat, and without injury to the trader, from lessening his number of passengers?

It is matter of congratulation that the builders have already addressed themselves to solve the difficulty; and the specimen of narrow guage carriages of Mr. Henry Gray, Mr. R. Carpenter (Paddington), Mr. Rock, of Hastings (Gower and Co., Stratford), and Mr. Miller, of Hammersmith, have been so designed, that without increasing the draught of the horse, the public convenience is considerably furthered. This is done by a re-arrangement of form and adjustment of materials and parts, which could only have occurred to practical men. Let a freedom to the trade be given, and even these specimens may be improved upon. Some specimen carriages of builders, are illustrated, and described in a subsequent part of this book.

These four builders concur in the view above suggested, as to the class of vehicles required for the metropolis; and the concurrent testimony of other builders may be added, which is, that the broad guage omnibuses would not answer for the London streets.

Again, with reference to objections raised as to the height and width of the narrow guage. New carriages are already suggested to remedy this complaint, but in any material deviation of length, width, or height, the result must be, that as the draught of the horses would be increased, there must either be the broad guage, or a reduction of length of the narrow guage, so that two horses could draw the diminished vehicle; by this last alternative, the passengers would have the Statute length (16 inches) of their seat reduced, and be squeezed into 14 inches; thus the additional head and knee room would be acquired at the expense of the seat room. Then, also, the question of passenger fares would arise; for all prices in these public conveyances being, from their origin, regulated according to the average profits, it would follow, if the owner lost 20 per cent. of passengers, they would lose 20 per cent. of fares.

It is difficult, under such circumstances, to lay down any arbitrary rule as to the construction of public vehicles, without great latitude being allowed for the consequences which are sure to arise; practical men should be left to their own competition, and restrictions carefully avoided. It will be seen in the specimens given, that the makers have already competed with each other, and improved in ventilation, form, and design, leaving little to be desired, upon the assumption that the London vehicle must be drawn by two horses and be compact. The nobility now adopt light broughams and clarences, in preference to the old palatial gentleman's coach.

The rate of speed of a Parisian omnibus is a little over four miles per hour, that of ours above six: on the early morning journeys in London, many are timed over seven and even eight miles per hour.

"The principle of competition has led to an instructive result in respect to Metropolitan Omnibuses. When each proprietor had only a few vehicles, he opposed and was opposed by his neighbours on all sides, and a scene of recklessness ensued, which endangered the lives and limbs of passengers as well as pedestrians. But this has given way to large combinations or associations, in which each proprietor brings his contribution of vehicles and horses to the common stock, and agrees to obey certain rules laid down for the

guidance of all. The result has been admirable. With a few exceptions here and there the omnibus system is now conducted with a *regularity, precision, civility, and safety which was never before equalled*\*. The number of these mutual associations are now 33, each of which has a road director and numerous timekeepers, for the superintendence and control of the daily working of these carriages. To the above testimony may be added the following remarks:

"By far the cheapest, best regulated, and most convenient class of vehicles, are what the 6th and 7th Victoria calls 'Metropolitan Stage Carriages.' These consist of omnibuses and stage coaches journeying within the limits of the police district; which extends over a radius of fifteen miles from Charing Cross. The rise of the system by which these conveyances are now managed is recent, and its progress has been extremely rapid. Fifteen years ago†, a few very slow and unpunctual stages were the only means of transit provided for the citizens to convey them to their suburban residences. A little earlier, only one stage plied from Paddington to the Bank, along a road over which an omnibus now passes every three minutes in the day; and this single vehicle, going in the morning and returning at night, was not always full. Its fares were two shillings inside, and eighteen-pence outside. The same distance is now travelled over for sixpence. Stage coaches have been almost entirely superseded by omnibuses. Perhaps the latest 'on the road' are one or two which ply between Hampstead and the City‡.

"The change from the quiet sober proceedings of these old-fashioned 'short' stages to the rattling activity and bustle of the new school, pictures most vividly the alteration which a few years have made in the habits and notions of the London public. Let us, for example, recall the daily routine of the vehicle which five-and-twenty years ago plied between Gracechurch Street and Peckham, a village some four miles south of London. The driver, probably an honest old broken-down guard, or coachman of some 'long' stage, made his appearance in the stable-yard

\* C. Knight's Cyclopædia.

† This was written in 1845.

‡ There are Stage Coaches at work on many roads.

about an hour and a-half before the time he would be required to finish his three miles' journey. Having seen the horses 'put to,' and driven them round to the booking-office at the green-grocer's, to receive his orders for the day, he made his first call to take up one of those gentlemen whom he regularly drove to and fro daily. Now if, on arriving at his first patron's house, Mr. Jones had not quite done breakfast, the driver made no objection to wait long enough for the leisurely imbibition of the last cup of coffee; and when, after some exercise of patience, Mr. Jones was at last seated, he would drive off to Mr. Smith's, who would perhaps be found waiting on his steps, having his great coat leisurely helped on by his maid-servant, with Mrs. Smith at the parlour door wishing him good-bye, and entreating him not to catch cold. The coating and shawling over, Mr. Smith would get slowly into the coach, and be driven with his friend Jones to his friend Robinson's. Perhaps the last gentleman was also a little behind, and there was another delay of five minutes. At length he appears in the front garden ready to start; but lo! he has forgotten his lunch, and out rushes his wife announcing that fact, and bringing a whity-brown parcel: out also rush seven or eight children, who call papa to account for attempting to go away without kissing them. This little family scene duly enacted, Mr. Robinson really is ready, and the stage wends its way up Camberwell Lane to make its fourth call—perhaps for a maiden lady going to spend the day with a friend in town, who makes her appearance with her dress-cap carefully screwed up in an old newspaper. Meantime a few outside passengers are picked up—people in humbler circumstances, who, however much inclined, did not dare to ride inside, for fear of offending the aristocratic notions of their superiors. Had, for instance, the lady with the cap found her grocer seated inside the vehicle, in the place of either of those highly 'respectable' characters, Messrs. Jones, Smith, or Robinson, she would in all probability have taken away her custom both from the coachman and the tea-man. By such class-prejudices were the suburban aristocracy of London swayed only a quarter of a century ago. But now, omnibuses have changed all that. When we were last in London we rode to the Bank between a peer of the realm and a common soldier!

"The Peckham stage, being at length fairly upon the road, would arrive at its destination about the appointed time—a little before ten—its passengers separating to meet again at four, and to be set down in time for a five o'clock dinner, in exactly the same order as they were taken up in the morning. Such is a fair sample of the stage vehicles of London five-and-twenty years ago. The change, considering the shortness of the interval, is wondrous, and it has been mainly effected by the introduction of omnibuses\*."

The following statement, laid before the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of the London Omnibus trade, in 1852-3, speaks for itself:—

#### DIRECT TAXATION.

	PER ANN.
The sums paid by the London Omnibus Proprietors, in Mileage Duties and Licences, are about . . . . .	£130,000
Tolls in the Metropolitan District, paid by Omnibuses annually, between . . . . .	£40,000 & 50,000

#### Articles (some indirectly taxed) as follows:

	PER ANN.
There were in 1852-3 1,200 Omnibuses in daily use, which cost on an average £120 each . . . . .	144,000
Harness for each Omnibus, £20 . . . . .	24,000
Stable Utensils, &c., at least £5 for each Omnibus . . . . .	6,000
Repairs of Omnibuses, at £52 per annum each Omnibus . . . . .	62,000
Consumption of Corn to each Horse per week, 8s. 9d., being, per ann. . . . .	358,800
Consumption of Hay per wk., 14 Trusses to each stud of 10 horses, per annum . . . . .	117,000
Consumption of Straw per week, 10 Trusses each stud, per ann. . . . .	26,400
Rent of Stabling, £20 for each Omnibus per annum . . . . .	2,400
Shoeing of 12,000 Horses per annum . . . . .	32,200
Lamps required by recent Act of Parliament . . . . .	3,000
Persons (indirectly taxed in many of the necessities of life, and in Parochial Rates), 6,000 men, employed as Conductors, Drivers, Stable-men Time-keepers, Clerks, Smiths and others, at least averaging a weekly salary of 28s. each man, being £8400 weekly, or per annum . . . . .	436,800
Horses employed for Omnibuses, averaging 10 Horses for each Omnibus, each Horse on the average costing £20 . . . . .	240,000

Like the coaches, the number of omnibuses has been greatly exaggerated: it has been stated at 3,000: it never approached even half that number at the time of the Great Exhibition; the business has been latterly retrogressing, and it is believed that the number

\* Chambers's Journal, New Series, 1845.

of vehicles is now under 1,000; that there is an evil somewhere is manifest, from the Parliamentary returns, which give a decrease of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in the returns of the duty paid in 1854 less than 1853. The figures the last five years are:—

1850 .....	Licences.....	£ 4,295	
" .....	Mileage .....	105,424	
			£109,719
1851 .....	Licences.....	4,493	
" .....	Mileage .....	113,123	
			117,616
1852 .....	Licences.....	5,885	
" .....	Mileage .....	135,641	
			141,526
1853 .....	Licences.....	4,663	
" .....	Mileage .....	136,318	
			140,981
1854 .....	Licences.....	4,400	
" .....	Mileage .....	120,804	
			125,204

Deficiency of 1854 as compared with 1853, upwards of £15,000!

The cause of these variations, as given by the traders, is, that the duty amounts to a tax of from 15 to 20 per cent. on the receipts, that they pay about £120 per year upon each vehicle; that they are taxed £3 3s. per year licence, their coachmen and conductors 5s. per year each, and three halfpence for every mile the wheel turns; and as they must run 60 miles a day to get a remunerative profit, is so excessive that it is crushing the omnibuses, as it has done the stage coach.

The London omnibuses are under the control or supervision of the police establishment, which is a subject of great annoyance to the owners, as they have been refused the Right of Appeal against police actions and regulations.

The Metropolitan Commissioners of Police, under 16 and 17 Vic., cap. 33 (Mr. Fitzroy's Act), can refuse to allow an omnibus to be licensed, by withholding what is called a preliminary certificate of approval; and even after such certificate and such licence has been obtained and paid for, can suspend the licence for such time as the Commissioners may think proper, and a penalty is imposed for using a carriage after the commissioner gives notice it is not to be used, no opportunity being given to try the merits of the case. The proprietors complain of the powers conferred by this act; and as there



is no appeal against the proceedings of the commissioner, he may exercise his authority and commit an error in judgment, not only as to the carriage—not only as to the horse—but even as to the construction of the words of an Act of Parliament.

It is not unreasonable to urge, that the opinion of carriage builders upon questions of construction of a vehicle, or of the veterinary surgeons as to the fitness of a horse, or of a lawyer as to the intent, meaning, or construction of an Act of Parliament, should be taken in preference to a constable's; but the error in the 16th & 17th Vic., cap. 33—is that the act constitutes the police constable a carriage builder—a veterinary surgeon—and a lawyer. How easily it is to fall into a serious error is shown by the following circumstance

The 5th & 6th Vic., cap. 79, sec. 13, enacts as follows:—"That no Stage Carriage shall be allowed to carry at one time a greater number of passengers in the whole, or in the inside or on the outside thereof, than the same is constructed to carry according to the Regulations of this Act; and that no such carriage shall be deemed to be constructed to carry a greater number of passengers than the same will contain at one time, upon fit and proper seats provided therein or thereupon for that purpose, allowing for every passenger, on an average, upon each and every separate seat, a space convenient for sitting thereon of sixteen inches, measuring in a straight line lengthwise on the front of each seat: provided always, that no child under five years of age, sitting in the lap, shall be deemed a passenger within the meaning of this Act."

Three years ago the police contended that the omnibus roof seat was not a "proper" seat under that section, and a magistrate convicted on complaint. The proprietors contended that the statutable sixteen inches were given: they carried the case before the judge of the Middlesex Sessions, and after hearing evidence and counsel, the conviction was quashed, and the seat declared legal\*.

If this conviction had been confirmed, what would have become of the Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester and Liverpool Carriages, for they are under the same section? Yet the 16th & 17th Vic., cap. 33, would now authorise the refusal of a preliminary certificate,

\* Case of the Queen v. Gaywood, Westminster Sessions, 21st January, 1851.

or the suspension of a licence on account of that very seat—*contrary to the previous Act which is not repealed*. Thus this anomaly might occur, that the London Omnibuses might be prohibited using the very seat which the Manchester and Edinburgh could not be touched for using.

To constitute police constables judges of stages, is to expect of them a knowledge of the durability and application of elm, ash, oak, mahogany, iron, steel, spokes, and other materials, of axles and springs, and of the soundness, quality, durability and draught of horses.

These reflections are made from consultations with coach builders and veterinary surgeons, who have had to learn their trades and professions, not with the intention to throw discredit on the capacity of the police force, but to show the absurdity of expecting men who are created into a force for the *Protection* of the lives and property of Her Majesty's subjects, being armed with the power to judge and decide on trade questions. The evil is in the law which creates the power, not in the ministers.

To put an illustration, imagine the powers of this act to apply to the Oriental and other Steam Passenger Boats—that the police constable was constituted a judge of the engine being in a fit and proper condition for public use, and the steam boat fit for the reception of passengers, that an engine on the North Western line and its tender and carriages depended on the judgment of a police constable—what would Stephenson, Locke or others say to the compliment paid to them? The coach builders have no such merits as these men of science, but the analogy holds good. If it be urged in reply, that the intention of confiding such matters to the police, is only that clean and wholesome carriages and horses should be used, attention must be directed to the fact, that the police have gone beyond such intention—that even a magistrate misconstrued the act, and why should there be a doubt? It has also been said that there is an appeal through the control of the Secretary of State. But is that sound? is it reasonable? In the matters the Home Office have, they are mostly cases where magistrates have been wrong, even after a public hearing. The objection here made is, that there is no public hearing—no appeal; and the principle of

placing any trade or property in the power of a Police establishment is dangerous, and opposed to civil liberty.

Mr. Fitzroy's Bill, in taking away the appeal, has given cause for complaints of injustice and arbitrariness. It may stand as it is for years, but the time will come when the disapprobation it has created, and will create, would have been well obviated.

The Act can only be rendered palatable by a concession of the right of appeal. Public opinion on that point is clear and decisive enough; and every year that right is withheld only adds to the injustice. The following extracts from the press on the subject must end our notice of the matter:—

"No one individual should have so much power, or be enabled to delegate so much power to another, as is proposed to be conferred by this Bill."—*Morning Herald*, May 7, 1853.

"A more wanton aggressiou upon the rights of property and the independence of Englishmen has not been perpetrated since the abdication of James II., than is about to be inflicted by the Act in progress."—*Weekly Times*.

"The Omnibus Proprietors complain, with justice, of the proposed increase of the Power of the Commissioners of Police to regulate their business by suspending or withholding their Licences, without any previous decision of a magistrate."—*Weekly Dispatch*, May 22nd, 1853.

"We believe it to be utterly impossible that the Chief Commissioner of Police can satisfactorily discharge the additional duties which this Bill imposes on him; but even were he another 'admirable CRICHTON,' and combined the varied excellencies of that mythic personage, we should still, in defence of human freedom, protest against confiding to a single individual an arbitrary and irresponsible power, which the history of human nature, from the days of Cæsar to those of the Autocrat of Russia, PROVES TO BE A SOURCE OF TYRANNY AND INJUSTICE, SLAVISH IN PRINCIPLE, AND MISCHIEVOUS IN PRACTICE."—*Sunday Times*, June 12, 1853.

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### OMNIBUS SERVANTS AND THE "BADGE."

Among the many suggestions received as to the London omnibuses, there is a portion—relating to the public servants—entertaining hopes that the practice of driving these men to police courts, like sheep to a pen—and inflicting fines proportionately to their pleading guilty or not guilty, which it is almost needless to notice—that such has been the habit at police courts is a truth—but such mon-

trosities are at an end. The good spirit of the *Times* Reporter at Bow-street some years ago, in denouncing such Dogberry style of *Justice*, (!) and the decision of Lord Palmerston in the cab driver Phillips's case, awarding the man compensation for magisterial oppression and injustice, owing to the benevolent exertion of the late Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, M.P., may be said to have extinguished the cause of such complaints. As to the objection to the licences, they are an emblem of the past—for the old stage coachmen were licensed as well as the present. Inequality is a characteristic of all the laws affecting public conveyances, and the men are no more exempt than their machines. Drivers and Conductors are subject to a yearly licence of 5s. each, which is considered unfair by comparison, as such licences are not attached to engine drivers and stokers, captains, engineers and assistants on boats: the law permitting a man having the safety of thousands of the public in his train or boat to be unlicensed. The inequality is converted into an injustice in the contingent of the licence; for the servants are compelled to wear a metallic ticket, attached to a particular strap, on the left breast. Now to this there is a case for reform. There is no hardship in wearing the ticket beyond its being repugnant to a man's feelings, even though the law has a double operation; for the master is responsible to produce his drivers and conductors, and is bound to retain the licence of his servant; and the magistrate can adjudge payment by the proprietor of penalties inflicted on his servants, and even fine the proprietor for not producing the servant. The Act 6th & 7th Vic., cap. 86, sec. 17, states "That every licensed driver, conductor, and waterman shall at all times during his employment, and when he shall be required to attend before any Justice of the Peace, wear his ticket conspicuously upon his breast, in such manner that the whole of the writing thereon shall be distinctly legible; and every driver, conductor, or waterman who shall act as such, or who shall attend when required before any Justice of the Peace, without wearing such ticket in manner aforesaid, or who, when thereunto required, shall refuse to produce such ticket for inspection, or to permit any person to see the writing thereon, shall for every such offence forfeit the

sum of forty shillings." These are the exact words; it does not specify which breast, or that it shall be hung round the neck by a leather strap. The act would be complied with by fixing the ticket to the coat on the right or left breast, so that it could be distinctly seen and read.

The registering of public servants is more likely to be increased than diminished. It may be suggested, that the mode of conducting the badge regulations should be as inoffensive as possible—one thing is, the men are only required to wear their badge when at work, or before a magistrate, which is in favour of the rule having reference to the public protection only; and the best way, perhaps, to conciliate, will be, not to consider the badge as a ticket for the information of constables, but as a guarantee that the wearer of it is competent and respectable. If the men will look at it in this light, there can be little doubt that the mode of wearing it will be remedied. The removal of it altogether is not likely to be obtained, as public policy requires its retention in cases of fly and hackney carriage drivers, and there would be a difficulty to properly explain the difference between the omnibus servants and them—though, as to the stage and omnibus coachmen, the public necessity for a "badge" is not so patent, and it may be, without danger, dispensed with in their favour; the more especially as protection is afforded by the masters, who are not likely to entrust a stud of valuable horses, as well as the carriage, to the care of a reckless driver; and also because the horses, vehicles and men are under the eye of the masters, timekeepers and road directors.

There are many of these men who may, without any disparagement to that type of honesty and benevolence—the old coachman—claim sympathy and respect for equal industry, humanity and kind feelings—a trait of character acknowledged to exist in the majority of them, whatever may be the oppressive and degrading effects of the off-hand and summary control they have been subject to.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## HACKNEY CARRIAGES AND CABS.



HACKNEY Coaches\* are the oldest description of metropolitan public conveyances. It has been stated that the Hackney Coach was introduced in the reign of Charles I., and how that monarch, by his arbitrary proclamation, restricted their use, except they went on three mile journeys, and positively forbade their existence, unless the owners kept ready for the royal service, whenever required, four

able-bodied horses.

"Captain Baily, said to have accompanied Raleigh in his last expedition to Guiana, employed four hackney coaches, with drivers in liveries, to ply at the 'May-pole,' in the Strand, fixing his own rates, about the year 1634 (Charles I.). Baily's coaches seem to have been the first of what are now called hackney coaches—a term at that time applied indiscriminately to all coaches let for hire"†.

In 1637, Charles I. limited the number to fifty. In 1653 (Commonwealth) they were increased to one hundred; and in 1662 (Charles II.), further increased to four hundred. In 1823, eight licences were granted for a new cab or cabriolet. The number of both coaches and cabs was limited until 1832, when the existing restrictions upon their increase were removed.

There are many references in the *Spectator* to travelling in

\* From Hack, a hired coach.

† The post-chaise invented in France was introduced at the same period by Mr. Tull, son of the writer on husbandry.

hackney coaches; and in the *Weekly Journal* of the 30th March, 1713, appears the following account of a perplexing facetious trick, of extracting wigs out of these vehicles. "The thieves have got such a villainous way now of robbing gentlemen, that they cut holes through the backs of hackney coaches, and take away their wigs, or the fine head-dresses of gentlewomen: so a gentleman was served last Sunday, in Tooley Street, and another but last Tuesday, in Fenchurch Street; wherefore, this may serve as a caution to gentlemen and gentlewomen that ride single in the night-time, to sit on the fore-seat, which will prevent that way of robbing."

Noblemen and gentlemen sold their old coaches to builders and dealers, who mended the vehicles up, and either re-sold them, or let them on hire to the drivers. This was the hackney coach—to all appearances the same as the coach of the gentry, and the stands displayed an array of carriages, with dukes' and peers' coronets, and the armorial bearings of the gentry on the panels: they were generally drawn by worn-out coach horses, and were extremely commodious, but, like the gentleman's coach, have been superseded by light Broughams and Clarences. The cabriolet, or hooded chaise, was nearly the same as the modern



park cab, the hood being contracted so as to give space for the driver on the off-side, the other portion of the seat being confined by holding two persons: many of these hoods, from malformation or age, had thus very much the appearance of a section of a pear or balloon. They were decidedly dangerous to both passengers and drivers, and are now out of date.

"A hackney-coach stand presented a picture of perfect repose. The horses stood motionless, and were either fast asleep, like their master on the box, or stood quietly munching chopped hay out of nose-bags suspended from their heads. The coachman sat under the weight of a heavily-caped 'box'-coat,

either in a state of profound reflection or of nodding somnolency. When, therefore, any one wanted his services, it was necessary to bawl with might and main; but as that very often proved ineffectual, the attendant 'waterman' of the stand was often obliged to use active measures to wake him. Having recovered from his reverie, or his nap, the driver slowly rolled himself off his seat, and, assisted by the waterman, removed the nose-bags, or awoke the horses, and dragged them by the head-gear to the side of the pavement; the door-steps were then leisurely unfolded, and the 'fare,' or passenger, helped in. If the animals were thought to want water, a few minutes were occupied in giving it to them, and after the coachman had handed the waterman his 'rent'—a perquisite of one halfpenny, receivable every time a coach left the stand—the wheels were made to revolve at the rate of about three miles an hour. So notoriously slow were the motions of these vehicles, that when a coachman of extraordinary activity carried his enterprise so far as to solicit custom by saying to a passer-by, 'Coach, sir?' the reply frequently was, 'No, thank you—I am in a hurry.'

"The old 'Jarvies,' as they were called by their familiars, were, it is true, a tiresome, surly race; but they possessed a slow-going, rugged respectability, which cannot be overlooked when a comparison is made between them and their successors. Firstly, they never raced in the streets; and although this merit is much diminished when we remember the age of their horses and the weight of their vehicles—yet elderly people, who now walk about London at the imminent risk of being knocked down by some recklessly-driven cab, cannot but look back upon the hackney-coach times with regret\*!!!"

After the hood cab came Mr. Boulnois' patent one-horse cab, with a door behind, the driver on top, and the passengers sitting *vis-à-vis*†: then came Harvey's Quarto Bus—then Brougham Cabs for two—and the Patent Hansom, which latter (the only vehicle now existing for two passengers) with the Clarence are the only two descriptions of cabs extant. The clarence cab is a four-wheel vehicle, drawn by one horse; there are two seats inside, the dimensions of which

\* Chambers's Journal, New Series.

† Similar to a cab used for a short time about fifty years ago.



differ in many carriages. In Clarences, the driver is allowed to carry four inside passengers; there is a seat on the box for the driver, upon which one person is also allowed to be carried outside, making five in all. Before Mr. Fitzroy's Act, in 1853, all the London cabs were licensed for two persons, though there was no illegality in carrying four.

It appears singular that such an anomaly in the two classes of cabs should exist as this—that the two-passenger Hansom, with two wheels, and unquestionably the most expensive in make and horsing, should be fixed to a fare the same as the five-passenger Clarence with four wheels. There is a great distinction between the two vehicles and their riders; the Hansom is used by the first classes, who require speed as well as comfort and pleasure; the Clarence is a closed cab. The four-wheel vehicle, by carrying five persons, has often the chance of getting two shillings per mile; the Hansom, as it only carries two persons, can never get legally more than sixpence per mile. As one carriage has an advantage over the other, the effect of this injustice and anomaly will be, ultimately, to depreciate the property in Hansom cabs; but a trifling advantage to them, in making the fare for the first mile somewhat higher than that for the other carriages, will lead to improvements as well as add to the comfort of the passenger.

As to the arbitrary standard fare of sixpence per mile, the experience of the trade has shown that neither the masters nor men can work under it, and that many of the public are next to being ashamed to tender a price which they are conscious is not a remunerative one. For what use can it remain in the statute book? The advantage of its maintenance, it may be said, does not justify the expense of the painted fares which have been put up at the ranks: it has been oiled over by the allowance, in case of extra passengers over two; but as such extra allowance only extends to one description of vehicle, and from which the other is shut out, it will, whilst it remains, be a source of litigation and harassing complaints, and cause the time of the police courts to be taken up with trifles. As to the fixing of a standard at all, arguments are put forth that it is opposed to free trade; because railways, and steam boats, and stages fix their own fares; whilst *it is answered*, that the latter ply constantly, and cabs only come

t of the ranks for parties on hire. Statistics are given, showing e public cannot be carried at such a fare; and there are some 10 want a sliding scale, regulated by the price of corn.

There is great weight certainly in all objections against an arbitrary standard fixed upon a low price of provisions, because it might just as well enact that oats should always be sold at a fixed price, and that all farmers should deliver their clover, hay and straw at a tendered price.

Arbitrary standards of tariff, it may also be urged, are objectionable, because they make a man suddenly rich or suddenly poor, and cause sudden revolutions in property. But it may be replied, that the cab system is different from railways, steam vessels, stage coaches and omnibuses: in neither of those cases are the public servants, the engineers, or the drivers interested in the receipts for their own remuneration: and if there is any ground for the continuance of a standard in cab fares, it is necessitated by the system of cab sub-letting. Another argument which is set forth is fallacious, viz., that because stages and omnibuses have a right to fix their own fares, that cabs and flys are entitled to the same right—the circumstances are widely apart; the former are restricted, under a severe penalty, from straggling out of a beaten track of road, specified on the carriage; the hackney carriage can transport itself from east to west, from north to south, and has no restriction as to where they are to commence or finish the plying. If hackney carriages were licensed to ply only to and from specific points, the argument would hold good. The argument might be inverted, if the hackney carriages fixed their own fares by the omnibuses applying for liberty to remove the statutable name of the route, and go any distance, and any route they chose: if there is force in the argument in the one case, it is equally sound in the other.

The revenue of hackney carriages was—

In 1845 .....	£60,081
„ 1846 .....	65,933
„ 1847 .....	69,694
„ 1852-3 .....	84,556

In 1853 the then existing duty was remodelled by a reduction

of about 40 per cent. ; the reason was on account of the reduction of the eightpenny to the sixpenny fare, the revenue being increasing one. The Government considered such an allowance from the public income would meet with satisfaction—but a boon to the public was not worth the reduction of duty, nor was it satisfactory to the proprietors. The number of carriages was 1852—3,191 ; 1853—3,214 ; 1854—3,720.

It has been contended that what London wants in the cab is an open britska for four persons, or an open cab upon four wheels, and an analogous vehicle to the Brighton and Southampton flys. During the discussion on the late cab bill, the superiority of the Southampton build was maintained. The fares of that town, however, are for one horse cabs one shilling per mile, two horse ditto one shilling and sixpence. The Southampton carriages measure 20 feet from the end of the pole to the end of hind wheel, height from ground 20 inches, length of seat inside 3-feet-4 inches, breadth across from back to back 5 feet, height from the centre of the cushion in a perpendicular line to the roof 3-feet-6 inches. Messrs. Parr (Southampton) state that these carriages are excellent that they will challenge the world for street carriages, that the Eastern or double-seated Broughams are painted and lined exactly to any private carriage in or out of London, and some of them have cost as much as £140 each, and numbers £120 ; there are one hundred in Southampton, ten of them being cab phaetons and britskas. The next town worthy of notice for its public carriages is Bath. In this city the fares are fixed by the Corporation at one shilling per mile for three persons, for an extra person an additional sixpence per mile : they are to be drawn by horses not less than 14½ hands high, not to exceed 10 cwt., and to have the number and proprietor's name painted on each of the doors, the distances are measured, and certified by city surveyors. The Cheltenham fares are the same as Bath, other cities and towns also have fares more advantageous than the metropolis. At Bristol and Plymouth there is no charge under one shilling, additional half-miles fourpence. Exeter has one shilling ; at Birmingham the fares are, two persons one shilling and sixpence per mile, four persons one shilling per mile ; at Manchester it is ninepence per mile for one or two persons, and one shilling

per mile for three or four; and at Liverpool the fares are—cars one shilling per mile, and sixpence half miles.

With these remarks we leave the question of London cab fares, referring for further information to the statements of the proprietors and of the drivers, as set out in the petitions printed in the appendix, and supply the following illustration of the American cab system on the authority of Routledge's American Hand Book, recently published, which presents a contrast to that of the metropolis.

**"ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK.**

"On arriving at the wharf, passengers will be beset by cab and hack drivers, importuning in the most violent manner, and offering to convey you to the different hotels, or to any part of the city on the most reasonable terms. There is, in all probability, no part of the United States where a more insolent set of imposters present themselves for cabmen and hack drivers, than New York. When they are allowed to come to the ship's side, you will find their whips dangling in your face before you land; and to step upon the wharf with a valise in your hand, expecting to reach the head of the wharf, for the purpose of seeking an hotel on foot, would be to find yourself beset by twenty drivers, probably jostling you its whole length. These hackmen have long been a disgrace to New York; and when we consider that there are municipal regulations intended to abate the annoyance, but which are seldom regarded or enforced, the disgrace is still worse. A hackman will offer to carry you to any part of the city for the "regular fare," but when he has landed you, he will insist on twice or three times the amount, claiming it either upon distance or extra luggage, and he knows he is safe in his abusive language and demand under the expense and annoyance of seeking redress.

"We must add that few of these hackmen are American, being mostly Irishmen of the lowest order. It is always better for the traveller to take the hack belonging to some respectable hotel, which he can select by the name on the driver's badge. He will be less liable to imposition, and he can leave the settlement to the clerk at the office of the hotel."

## CHAPTER IX.

SUGGESTED PLAN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE COUNTRY RIDING  
SERVICE OF THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

A PALPABLE evil arising out of the decline of coaches, is, that wherever they are taken off, and the mail bags have to be carried by the post boy, the post office is made to go back to the system which existed before Palmer. To cover the mileage duties, the post office is now paying an advanced price for the supply of mail coach accommodation for carrying the letters; and in addition, where, failing of the passenger traffic, mail coaches are taken off, and riding services substituted, it must be to the injury of the post office, as the price of the riding service is nearly double that of the coach. (The contract price per mile paid in 1837, for coaches, was from  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  to  $3d.$  per mile, the cart could not be done under  $5d.$ ) The re-arrangement of the stage tax, by increasing the supply of coaches, would thus be of advantage to the post office, and instead of the boy driving the cart, there would be the same protection as Palmer supplied in his mail coaches.

There are, however, many country districts, villages, and cross-roads, which would not support a two or four horse mail coach.

It is suggested as to these, that the following plan of conveyance could be successfully adopted, and a considerable benefit obtained by the post office, in reduction of prices paid for country riding services.

It is this:—that the system of boys on ponies, and mail carts, be superseded by a mail gig, either upon the principle of the Welsh and other passenger two-wheel one horse cars, carrying four passengers, or a system analogous to the Irish mail cars.

This plan cannot now be adopted in Great Britain, on account of the law regulating stages, which would embrace such gigs. But if

the stage duties be repealed, or modified provision could be made as to such vehicles, they would form one of the media of transit for country people; and the contractor, by obtaining passenger fares, would naturally do the post office work at reduced prices.

The scheme suggested is no idle theory. Sir Edward Lees, in his evidence in 1837, pronounced that it was then practicable and desirable; and the last eighteen years, during which the mails have been driven off the road, and the post has been extended so widely, renders its reconsideration important; and Mr. Rowland Hill, who has done so much in improving our postal arrangements, will here have a suggestion worthy of his master mind.

At the present day it is pertinent to add, that the mail gig plan is viewed with approbation by contractors in England and Scotland. Messrs. Davidson, of Perth, and Mr. Sheldon, of Windermere, who, as practical men, may be competent judges, vouch for its efficiency; the latter indeed says, that in his district it is a constant habit with the drivers to pick up passengers by the sly, and that he would have adopted the idea in 1849, but he found the English Stage Duties a prohibition\*.

Now, if this plan of passenger mail gigs is in operation in Ireland, why not extend it to Great Britain? and if there must be a tax, why not impose a small annual licence duty of £5 or £6 on such vehicles? Such a duty Mr. Sheldon estimates would net a yearly revenue of £20,000, and the Post-office would gain almost an equal amount on reduction of prices of riding services. The question involves therefore a large addition and saving to the public expenditure, and is based not on a mere assumption, but on views entertained by such authorities as the late secretary of the Edinburgh Post-office and Scotch and English Mail contractors.

\* See also Sir E. Lee's evidence—Post.

## CHAPTER X.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHING PARLIAMENTARY STAGES AND  
OMNIBUSES, FOR THE USE OF THE LABOURING CLASSES, AT  
RAILWAY STATIONS AND POPULOUS TOWNS (FREE FROM TAXATION).**

THE reflections in the preceding pages lead to another suggestion. It is, that the legislature having promoted a cheap and untaxed conveyance for the labouring classes by the railway, that an immense benefit would be conferred upon the population by establishing the same description of transit by omnibuses. Should this suggestion be adopted, there will be, in addition to the existing Parliamentary Cheap Train, a Parliamentary Cheap Omnibus, which could supply accommodation to the third class railway stations throughout England, Wales and Scotland, and be a boon to many of our industrious artisans, and the poorer classes of the kingdom.

It is not suggested that a literal penny per mile be the ruling and arbitrary fare, but an approximate price, because in many districts a penny would not yield such a return as would maintain the vehicle. There exists no difficulty in establishing this mode of transit, except in a revenue point of view; at least the experiment might be attempted. These Parliamentary carriages might be registered, made upon certain approved dimensions, the number of passengers specified, and the stations appointed. The fares could be regulated from stations, adapted as near to a penny per mile as would pay the working, and the owners their carriages, fares, &c., registered. To meet the expenses of such preliminary matter, a small licence of about £5 would be sufficient. By having the fares entered in an office, in this way—that the proprietor, previously to running a carriage, specify in a particular form the distance and routes, color, size, &c. of his carriage; and such particulars, if they were approved of, should be legal, a duplicate given to the proprietor, and a counterpart affixed on the carriage;—and

MENZIES' GLASGOW OMNIBUS.

Sections.

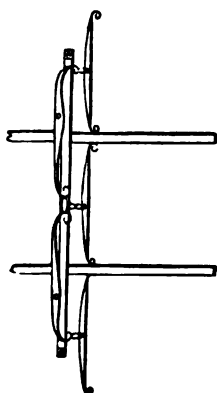


Fig. 3—Drawbars, Poles and Splinter Bar.



Fig. 4—Ventilation.

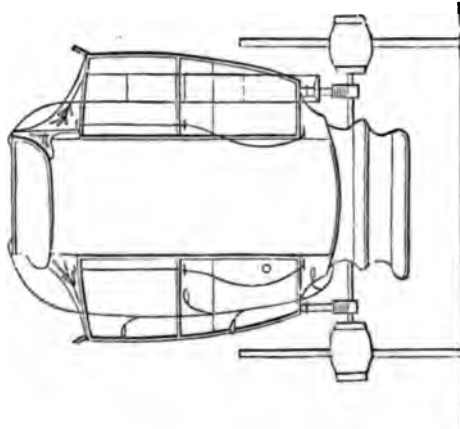


Fig. 2—Back or End View.



[Communicated by Mr. ANDREW MENZIES, Omnibus Proprietor  
and Builder, City Omnibus Office, Glasgow.]

### GLASGOW CITY OMNIBUS.

For some years past Glasgow has had the benefit of omnibus accommodation to a considerable extent, and to the very moderate fares charged is mainly owing the demand which has sprung up for houses of a superior class in the suburbs of the city. There are about forty city and suburban omnibuses at present on the various stations; but this is a smaller number than previously, as in consequence of the very high price of grain, and the duty, about a dozen were withdrawn within the last twelve months. The fares average one penny per mile. The accompanying sketch will show the description of omnibus in use in the city, and which, having been first introduced in Glasgow, has within the last few years come into general use in Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and other principal cities in England and Scotland.

The sketch No. 1, shows the side appearance of the vehicle; No. 2, the back, including the entrance; No. 3, the drawbars; and No. 4, the ventilator. These vehicles vary in size, having accommodation for from fifteen to twenty-one passengers inside, and about an equal number outside. The sketch is of an omnibus to carry nineteen inside and twenty outside passengers; one of the inside passengers sits at the head, looking towards the entrance—sixteen inches is allowed for each passenger. The weight is about twenty-six cwt. Access is had to the inside from behind by two steps, and the passenger is assisted by two brass rails on either side of the doorway (there are no doors on the city omnibuses): the height in the passage up the centre of the omnibus is six feet five inches, and the entire breadth within is five feet four inches; the passengers can therefore pass along without stooping, or inconveniencing each other. The height immediately above the passage up the centre, is fourteen inches more than the portion occupied by the seats. This serves not only for the convenience of passing up and down the vehicle, but the raised portion forms the seat for the outside passengers; and on each of the sides of this raised portion there are placed six ventilators. The sketch No. 1 shows some of these ventilators shut, some open, and some partially open. No. 4 shows the ventilator, which consists of a frame with centre of stained or coloured glass, and self-adjusting springs at each end of the frame. These springs keep the ventilators firmly in any position they may



the use of larger carriages, the real problem to be solved is, how can more room be given to the inside passengers without increasing the external dimensions of the vehicle?

Mr. Rock's solution of the problem may now be described, reference being made to the accompanying illustrations.

Fig. 1 is a side view of an omnibus built under his patent by Messrs. S. & J. H. Gower, of Stratford. The circular ends are constructed with bent timber and thin metal, which, from the peculiar form and arrangement, admit a very commodious step for the passengers to the roof seats, and also give great strength to the body (far greater than was obtained by the old system of corner pillars and rectangular framing), and thus allow of the intermediate pillars at the sides being reduced, and some of them dispensed with altogether. The principal feature of the invention, that indeed which accomplishes the end in view, as far as it seems to be possible, is shown by a comparison of Figs. 3 and 4; the former being a section of the framing and panelling of one side of an omnibus built on the old plan, the latter being a similar section of an omnibus on the new construction. The advantage gained may at once be seen, by comparing the widths of the seat in each section. In Fig. 3, the seat is 12 inches wide; in Fig. 4, it is one-fourth more, or 15 inches: and as this gain is doubled by the corresponding seat on the other side of the body, it follows that the available space in the interior is increased 6 inches, without any enlargement of the external dimensions—an increase sufficient to give a really practicable passageway from one end of the vehicle to the other, besides giving broader, and therefore more comfortable seats. The improvements include a better system of ventilation than had been previously in use, by means of a double roof, forming a chamber, which communicates with the interior by a longitudinal aperture covered with perforated zinc or cloth, and with the outer air by small openings at the ends.

The fore carriage has an improved bed plate, whereby the spring is more securely fixed, without being attached to the wheel-iron; and the latter may be removed in case of accident without disturbing the spring, which would prevent the omnibus from running, and so occasion the loss of several journeys. The bar, or platform, at the front end of the body, is removed, so that there is now no

obstruction to the feet of the passengers inside. It also permits the body to hang three inches lower, with additional space for the elliptic springs, which, by an improved arrangement of the ends, are enabled to adapt themselves to the weight of a single passenger, or a full load, with equal pliability. Fig. 2 is an end view of another omnibus on the same principle.

In consequence of these improvements in hanging the body, it is unnecessary now, as formerly, to fix the springs underneath the axle, or to use a cranked axle, the great weight and frequent breaking of which led Messrs. S. and J. H. Gowar, while fulfilling their contract with the London Conveyance Company, to introduce the mode of constructing the body deeper at the back end of the rocker, behind the axle, which they then carried downward, instead of cranking it.

This improvement of the body is one of the most valuable points in the modern omnibus, as, in conjunction with the other modifications, it renders one step sufficient at the hind part for access to the interior.

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## PART II.—STEAM TRANSIT.

## CHAPTER XI.

## STEAM VESSELS.

STEAM Vessels do not strictly come within the scope of a work on carriages; but, being an important item of conveyance, deserve a passing glance.

Experiments in steam navigation date prior to those of steam locomotives. From carrying of passengers it has extended to that of goods—to purposes of war, as well as of commerce; and whether we look on the application of steam for the transit of the ocean boats to America, the Indies, or Australia—for the carrying of the troops, or of the munitions of war—we are struck with the vastness of the power of marine and trading steam ships. Odessa and Sebastopol in the Black, Bomarsund in the Baltic, and Kola in the White Sea, have felt the effects of what science and progression have effected in applying steam for the purposes of war.

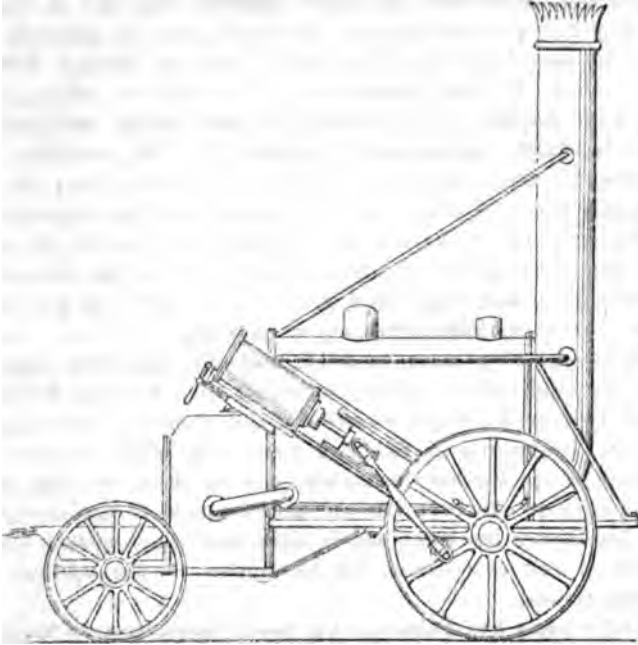
As an instance of the extent of steam navigation, we will refer to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, at Southampton, having received the details of that Company's splendid mercantile fleet. The Company have in service 12 large and 2 small steamers on the screw principle, and 24 on the paddle—a total of 38 boats—the largest being the *Simla*, screw, of 2600 tons, and 600 horse power; the smallest, a screw collier, the *Rajah*, of 500 tons, and 60 horse power. Total tonnage, 41,995; horse power, 12,790. To this might be added the large screw ship *Himalaya*, lately purchased by H. M. Government, of 3500 tons, and 700 horse power. The Company are now building two additional screw ships; one, the "*Pera*," of 2,200 tons, and 450 horse power; the other, of 2617 tons, and 450 horse power.

In the Baltic and Black Sea Fleets there is a host of screw and paddle war vessels, from the great *Duke of Wellington*, to the *Arrow* gun boat—in commerce there are the several American liners—the Irish mail and commercial boats—the Scottish and the collier boats—the ferry boats on the Clyde and Mersey—the Margate, Ramsgate, and the Thames passenger boats : it is impossible to give the details of them ; but, go where we will, we find, on sea or river, that steam ploughs the wave. The vast increase of these vessels is owing to their freedom from taxation ; they have, happily, never felt the burden of a passenger duty. If they had, every Gravesend, Woolwich, and Greenwich steamer would have to pay a tax of about £12 per week ; the boats plying between London Bridge and Kew, about £15 weekly ; and the steam packets between England and Ireland would be taxed per voyage from £20 to £30 ; while the ocean boats to India, and between this country and America, would, for every trip, have to pay from £300 to £500 FOR DUTIES!!!

Yet, even in that case, steam would have advantages over the horse ; for there are no road tolls on the sea. It would almost seem as if the Inland accommodation between short points was to be squeezed insufferably, whilst the larger sphere for action was to be left untouched.

What would have become of the passenger trade from Ireland to England, if such a tax had existed on steam vessels ? Under such a burden, would not the transit for the million between Gravesend and Richmond, on the Thames, have been confined within the most narrow limits ? Who would have heard of a penny ride from London Bridge to Westminster, or a ninepenny trip to Gravesend ?

The engineer, the builder, the shareholder, whether of ocean liners or Westminster penny boats—travellers of all classes, sexes and ages—commerce of every branch and bulk—participate in, feel the comforts of, and can enjoy, for trade or social purposes, the benefits of unfettered water transit. By what analogy, comparison, policy, reason, argument, equity, common sense, or justice, is that by land made a question of revenue ?



## CHAPTER XII.

### R A I L W A Y S.

**TREVITHICK AND STEPHENSON—THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER LINE—BROAD AND NARROW GAUGE ENGINES—TRAFFIC TABLES.**

**STRANGE**,—yet true,—before ever a turnpike act or stage coach, wooden railways or tramways were used in England.

Passing, however, over all the various inventions and experiments in stationary and locomotive, in goods and passenger, engines, in wooden and iron tramways, on common roads and on railroads, we will commence with the present century.\*

\* The next chapter embraces a summary of some of the earliest attempts at steam progression.

RICHARD TREVITHICK, a Cornish engineer, who died in 1833, "leaving no other inheritance to his family, but the grandeur of his name, and the glory of his works,"\* was the father of Steam Locomotives. GEORGE STEPHENSON, a Northumbrian collier, who died 12th August, 1848, possessed of great wealth, and loaded with honorable distinctions, bequeathing to his posterity an imperishable fame—whose son, Robert Stephenson, Esq., M.P., is equally renowned for his scientific attainments and engineering triumphs, in Great Britain and on the continent, and was the projector and engineer of that unequalled work—the Britannia Tubular Bridge—George Stephenson was the great pioneer and improver of steam locomotives, and of railways.

Mr. George Stephenson, in 1814, made his first steam engine, the "My Lord," after Trevithick's model; tried it on the Killingworth Colliery Railway; succeeded; and obtained a patent for improved locomotives the following year. In 1820 became the engineer of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, the first passenger railway. In 1824 was appointed engineer of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway; and in 1829 established, against much opposition and competition, his locomotive as the medium of railway transit.

We have seen how Palmer, the pioneer of horse locomotives, was treated, in 1784; similar in tone and character was the opposition, about the year 1826, to Mr. George Stephenson and his Liverpool line, in and out of the House of Commons.

When the bill was in committee, one of the members declared that an engineer "stating it was possible to make a locomotive travel 20 miles per hour, was only fit for a lunatic asylum!" while others, from "considerations of kindness" to the promoters of "so impracticable a scheme," advised the bill "to be rejected!" The Quarterly Review, too, came forth with an antagonistical article, discussing what it termed the "absurdity" of the plan, in a narrow and mean spirit of mockery rivalling that of

\* Whatever may be the opinion as to his superiority over WATT, or his equality with him, this must be confessed, that, next to Watt, no man has yet done so much for the steam engine as Richard Trevithick.—*Life of Trevithick*, by Hyde Clarke, Esq. *Mining Almanack*, 1849.

the old post-office officials of last century. Such croakers and alarmists would have been too much honored, if they had been made stokers to the first engine which went over the Menai Bridge.

But the bill did pass, and Stephenson had the satisfaction of triumphing on the line with his "Rocket," on a trial of engines in 1829, in the presence of the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and other distinguished gentlemen. The general opening of the railway took place the following year, acts for new railways were afterwards rapidly obtained, and the lines as rapidly made and opened. The "Rocket," of which a sketch appears at the commencement of this paper, performed its first trial journey of 30 miles, within two hours and a quarter; its second, within two hours and seven minutes; its speed varied; but its swiftest motion was about 29 miles per hour, its slowest 11 and a half. There were three competitors, but they stood no chance, and all the glory, and the prize of £500, fell to its renowned manufacturer. A new and peculiar feature in this engine was, it had a tubular boiler, which was adopted on a suggestion of Mr. Henry Booth, the secretary to the company.

Years, but not many, have rolled past, and we have seen the locomotive attain a speed of sixty miles per hour; in 1844—18 years after the assumption of the impracticability of a rate of twenty miles per hour was treated as a fact—the Legislature passed a compulsory Act (7 & 8 Vict., c. 85), that every Railway Company should carry, at least once a day each way, passengers for a penny per mile, at an average speed of not less than twelve miles per hour, including stoppages at every passenger station: and in 1854, every traveller by a Parliamentary train paying a penny per mile, is apt to complain of the slowness of his transit, if he is not borne on through the route over the very speed the *friends of progression* in 1826 treated as impossible in practice and absurd in theory.

On the opening of the Birmingham line, in 1838, we read the following remarks on the carriages:—

"The first class carriages are comfortable coaches, in which passengers may shut themselves up snugly enough; but the second class, which go first in order, are open, without a window or



curtain, to protect the traveller from any strong breeze, in the teeth of which the train may be running, and without a cushion to soften the effects of the vibratory concussion, which, as an American might say, is 'pretty considerable.' In one instance, owing to some defect in a carriage, the jolting was so very severe, as not merely to give extreme annoyance to all the passengers, but to incur the risk of injuring them. Several attempted to stand up, but the roofs of the carriages were so low as to prevent this being done with any comfort. Defects of this character will doubtless be remedied after the whole line of the railroad is fairly in use\*."

In 1853, we read the following observations on the English railways, from the pen of Mrs. H. B. Stowe :—

"The English cars are models of comfort and good keeping. There are six seats in a compartment, luxuriously cushioned and nicely carpeted, and six was exactly the number of our party. Nevertheless, so obstinate is custom, that we averred at first that we preferred our American cars, deficient as they are in many points of neatness and luxury, because they are so much more social. \* \* \* \* But that is the way here in England ; every arrangement in travelling is designed to maintain that privacy and reserve which is the dearest and most sacred part of an Englishman's nature. Things are so arranged here, that if a man pleases, he can travel all through England with his family, and keep the circle an unbroken unit, having just as little communication with anything outside of it as in his own house. From one of these sheltered apartments in a railroad car, he can pass to pre-engaged parlours and chambers in the hotel, with his own separate table, and all his domestic manners and peculiarities unbroken. In fact, it is a little compact home, travelling about."

From the same gifted pen we have the following account of the German Railway Stations :—

"Arrived at the [Wittenburgh] Station, we found we must wait till half-past five in the afternoon for the train. This would have been an intolerable doom in the disconsolate precincts of an English or American station, but not in a German one. As usual, this had

\* Penny Magazine. 1838.

a charming garden, laid out with exquisite taste, and all glowing and fragrant with plats of verbenas, fuschias, heliotropes, mignonette, and pansies, while rows of hot-house flowers, set under the shelter of neatly trimmed hedges, gave brightness to the scene."

Mrs. Stowe supplies the following anecdote of German railway travelling :—

"On our way from Frankfort to Halle, in a 'nich rauchen' car, too, a jolly old gentleman, whose joyous and abundant German sounded to me like the clatter of a thousand of bricks, wound up a kind of promiscuous avalanche of declamation, by pulling a match box from his pocket, and proceeding deliberately to light his pipe. The tobacco was detestable. Now if a man *must* smoke, I think he is under a moral obligation to have decent tobacco. I began to turn ill, and C. attacked the offender in French; not a word did he understand, and puffed on tranquil and happy. The idea that any body did not like smoke was probably the last that ever could be made to enter his head, even in a language that he did understand. C. then enlisted the next neighbour, who understood French, and got him to interpret that smoke made the lady ill. The chimney-descended man now took his pipe out, and gazed at it and me alternately, with an air of wondering incredulity, and seemed trying to realise some vast conception, but failing in the effort, put his pipe back and smoked as before! Some old ladies now amiably offered to change places with me, evidently regarding me as the victim of some singular idiosyncrasy. As I changed, a light seemed to dawn on the old chimney's mind—a good-natured one he was; he looked hard at me, and his whiffs became fainter, till at last they ceased, and he never smoked more till I was safe out of the car."

Mrs. Stowe's reference to the sociality of the American railway passenger cars, or carriages, will render the following description of them interesting\*—

"The form and structure of the carriages is a source of considerable economy in the working of the lines. The passenger carriages are not distinguished, as in Europe, by different modes

\* From Dr. Lardner's Museum of Science and Art.

of providing for the ease and comfort of the traveller. There are no first, second, and third classes; all are first class, or rather all are of the same class. The carriage consists of a long body, like that of a London omnibus, but much wider, and twice or thrice the length. The doors of exit and entrance are at each end, a line of windows being placed at each side, similar exactly to those of an omnibus. Along the centre of this species of caravan is an alley, or passage, just wide enough to allow one person to walk from end to end. On either side of this alley are seats for the passengers, extending crossways. Each seat accommodates two persons, four sitting in each row, two at each side of the alley. There are from 15 to 20 of these seats, so that every carriage accommodates from 60 to 80 passengers.\* In cold weather, a small stove is placed near the centre of the carriage, the smoke-pipe of which passes out through the roof; and a good lamp is placed at each end, for illumination during the night. The vehicle is thus perfectly lighted and warmed. The seats are cushioned, and their backs, consisting of a simple padded board about six inches broad, are so supported that the passenger may at his pleasure turn them either way, so as to turn his face or his back to the engine. For the convenience of ladies who travel unaccompanied by gentlemen, or who otherwise desire to be apart, a small room, appropriately furnished, is sometimes attached to the end of the carriage, admission to which is forbidden to gentlemen. \* \* \* It is quite true, that these carriages do not offer to the wealthy passenger all the luxurious accommodation which he finds in our best first class carriages; but they afford every necessary convenience and comfort."

To return to English lines:—

The next incident to be noticed is the "Battle of the Guages," in which we find another great man opposed by "impossibilities and impracticables;" and what is singular, by men from Liverpool and their engineer, who had been subject to an opposing spirit in their first conception. The act for the construction of the Great

\* At the end of this part will be found the description of a new patent carriage.



Western Railway was in 1835. The works were commenced in 1835, upon the "broad guage" plan of I. Brunel, Esq., which gives a space of 7 feet between the rails, the narrow guage of Mr. Stephenson giving 4 feet  $8\frac{1}{2}$ \*. Mr. Brunel, however, triumphed on a ballot, carrying his plan by a majority of 1647 votes. The votes were :—

For the broad guage . . .	7792
In opposition . . . . .	6145
	<hr/>
	1647

In the outset of the Great Western line, Mr. Brunel discarded the plan of supporting a heavy rail on isolated blocks of stone or wood, and adopted the system of continuous bearings, with certain deviations from the former practice. At first Mr. Brunel supported the longitudinal wooden beams, previously kyanised, by means of transverse bearers, which latter were in their turn screwed down to immense piles driven deeply into the ground between the tracks. A thin light rail of iron was then fixed upon the upper surface of the longitudinal bearer, and underneath the bearer sand or gravel was packed or rammed closely, so as to afford a continuous support throughout. These piles, however, were found to be useless, and were abandoned on many parts of the line.

The broad guage contest can scarcely yet be said to have been ended, nor is the extent of mileage to be compared to that of the narrow; still the Great Western have encircled a large area of country within their lines, and gradually enlarged, chiefly up to the North. There are now 320 miles of broad guage.

The greater breadth of the guage used on the Great Western gave much more space to the comfort of the passengers. There can be but little ground now for complaints (which it must be observed, were in the infancy of the "Lines,") even in the present Parliamentary class carriages. Second class carriages have windows, and, with the exception of the luxury of the stuffed seats and backs, are as well ventilated, and indeed more roomy, than the first class.

\* The Eastern Counties is 5 feet.

One of the curiosities of railway transit at this day is supplied by the Parliamentary Papers, which show that on the Great Western, the second class vehicles are adopted in preference to either first, third, or Parliamentary. Thus, in 1853, there travelled on that line,—

1st Class.	2nd Class.	3rd Class.	Parliamentary.	Period. Tickets.
597,772½	2,085,378½	343,728½	631,476½	320

The average fares being,—

1st Express.	1st Ord.	2nd Express.	2nd Ord.	3rd & Parl.
2d., 625	2d., 100	1d., 837	1d., 575	1d.

At the time of the Exhibition, in 1851, the two great rival companies, the North Western and Great Western, made and exhibited competing engines. The Great Western produced (manufactured at their works at Swindon) a locomotive engine and tender, which we are informed, by the catalogue, was capable of taking a passenger train of 120 tons at an average speed of sixty miles per hour, at an easy gradient. The evaporation of the boiler when in full work was equal to 1,000-horse power, of 33,000 lbs. per horse. The effective power, as measured by a dynamometer, was equal to 743 horse power. The weight of the engine, empty, was 31 tons; coke and water, 4 tons; engine, in working order, 35 tons; tender, empty, 9 tons; water, 1000 gallons, 7 tons 3 cwt.; coke, 1 ton 10 cwt. Total, 17 tons 13 cwt. The heating surfaces were, fire-box, 156 feet; 305 tubes, 1,759 feet; diameter of cylinder, 18 inches; length of stroke, 24 inches; diameter of driving-wheel, 8 feet; maximum pressure of steam, 120 lbs. The actual consumption of fuel in practice, with an average load of 90 tons, and an average speed of twenty-nine miles, including stoppages (ordinary mail train), has averaged 20.8 lbs. of coke per mile.

But the North Western would not be without “honorable” competition; that company producing an express locomotive engine, the “Liverpool,” on Crompton’s patent—which contained 2,285 feet of heating surface, being, they stated, 270 feet more than the largest engine on the broad gauge. Diameter of cylinder, 18 inches; length of stroke, 24 inches; diameter of driving-wheels, 8 feet; weight of engine machinery, 32 tons; coke and water,

4 tons; evaporation of boiler at full work equal to 1,140 horse power; pressure of steam, 120 lbs. on the square inch. The engine had a very low boiler, and the greatest weight was on the extreme wheels, which ensured steadiness\*.

If, as it has been suggested†, we take one line of railway with another, main lines with branch lines, and passenger traffic with goods traffic, it will be found that one locomotive is required for about every two miles of railway; to work all the traffic effectively, and to have a sufficient reserve of stores for contingencies, there being 7,641 lines of railway open in Great Britain and Ireland, there are now in use in the United Kingdom not less than 3,820 steam locomotives.

The following account of receipts, expenditure, &c., is given on the authority of a Railway Paper in 1853‡.

**THE RAILWAY TRAFFIC OF 1853.**—It appears that the gross receipt for the twelve months, amounted to £17,920,530 on 7774 miles of railway, against £15,543,610 on 7,337 miles of railway in 1852, showing an increase in the receipts of £2,376,920 on railways in the United Kingdom during the year 1853. The cost of constructing 7774 miles of railway, however, amounted, up to July last, to £263,636,320, being at the rate of £33,912 per mile. Thus the whole of the traffic for the year 1853, great as it has been, only amounts to 6·8 per cent. of the cost of construction, and deducting 48 per cent., which is about the average for working expenses, rates, taxes, and Government duty, leaves only £9,318,676, or 3·53 per cent. on the gross capital expended; but as about £100,000,000 of this is composed of borrowed and preference capital, which cannot be set down at less than 4½ per cent., there remains but £4,800,000 for dividend on the £163,636,320, or something less than 3 per cent.

\* Catalogue, Great Exhibition, 1851.

† Knight's Cyclopædia.

‡ This extract is given as it appeared, but neither the amount of receipts nor the length of the lines agree with the Parliamentary Returns; which latter show 7641 miles up to December 1853, instead of 7774, and £18,028,746 15s. 11d. of receipts, not £17,920,530. The discrepancy somewhat affects the other figures above, but it is likely the accounts were not so complete for the year when the notice was given. The Board of Trade Returns of the House of Commons for 1853 were made in June 1854, some time after this statement.

The average *Traffic Receipts* per mile per annum were as follows:—For 1842, £3118; for 1843, £3085; for 1844, £3278; for 1845, £3469; for 1846, £3305; for 1847, £2870; for 1848, £2556; for 1849, £2302; for 1850, £2227; for 1851, £2283; for 1852, £2238; and for 1853, £2471.

The amount of *Capital Expended* on the railways referred to, up to July 1842, was £52,380,100; in 1843, £57,635,100; in 1844, £63,482,100; in 1845, £71,646,100; in 1846, £83,165,100; in 1847, £109,528,000; in 1848, £148,200,000; in 1849, £181,000,000; in 1850, £219,762,730; in 1851, £229,175,235; in 1852, £239,467,453; and in 1853, £252,802,320.

The average *Cost* of railways in operation per mile would appear to be—in 1842, £34,690; in 1843, £36,360; in 1844, £35,670; in 1845, £35,070; in 1846, £31,860; in 1847, £31,709; in 1848, £34,234; in 1849, £35,214; in 1850, £35,229; in 1851, £35,058; in 1852, £34,630; and in 1853, £35,101.

The system of management adopted during the past 10 years has reduced the dividends on the great trunk lines above 50 per cent., and the value of railway stock to one-half, and in some cases to one-fourth and one-eighth. No doubt the traffic receipts have increased during this period from £4,843,000 to £17,180,530, or above 12½ millions during the 10 years; but the capital has also increased from £58,000,000 to £253,000,000 during the same time, or £195,000,000, and there is nothing to prevent the increase of expenditure during the next 10 years from 253,000,000 to £450,000,000, particularly as not much more than one-half the railways, for which acts have already been obtained, are as yet constructed. About 6000 additional miles of railway will also require the sanction of Parliament, in order to accommodate the traffic in various districts of the United Kingdom, so that a great deal yet remains to be done, both by the Legislature and by the projectors of railways.

*Way Traffic and Receipts in 1853, compiled from Parliamentary Returns by the Board of Trade.*

ENGLAND AND WALES.							
	No. of Passengers Travelling.	Receipts from Passengers.			Total Receipts from Passengers, and from Goods and Parcels, including all Receipts.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
le...	37,317,544½	3,219,002	15	1	7,029,245	18	7¾
c. ...	46,895,417	4,090,357	13	11¼	8,402,214	6	6
al...	84,212,961½	7,309,360	9	0¼	15,431,460	5	1¾
SCOTLAND.							
ne...	4,793,167	292,123	13	1½	793,980	12	1¼
c. ...	6,206,056½	405,585	1	10¼	971,742	14	11
al...	10,999,223½	697,708	14	11¾	1,765,723	7	0¼
IRELAND.							
ne...	2,969,604½	221,131	18	11	360,829	17	8
c. ...	4,104,870½	315,824	3	5	470,733	6	1
al..	7,074,475	536,956	2	4	831,563	3	9
oss al }	102,286,660	8,544,025	6	4	18,028,746	15	11



## CHAPTER XIII.

SUMMARY OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL DATES AND FACTS  
CONNECTED WITH STEAM TRANSIT\*.

- 1660. Tramways of wood and iron used about this period in the Newcastle collieries, to facilitate the passage of waggons to the Tyne.
- 1692. Savary's patent for steam engine.
- 1705. Newcomen and Crawley's patent for steam engine—the first which formed a connecting link between pumps and engines; it contained a cylinder, open at the upper end, fitted with a piston; and the upward movement of the piston was occasioned by the pressure of steam beneath it, whereas the downward movement was caused by the pressure of the air.
- 1716. Thin plates of malleable iron nailed on the upper surface of wood trams.
- 1767. Cast iron bars substituted for wooden trams.
- 1768. Watt's first steam engine.
- 1769. Watt's patent.
- 1774. Steam-boat tried on the Seine.
- 1782. Murdoch's steam engine.
- „ Steam-boat tried on the Sône.
- 1783. Fitch's steam-boat to America.
- 1787. Ramsay's steam-boat experiment on the Potomac.
- 1788. Steam-boat experiments in England and in Scotland.
- 1793. Stone blocks used in lieu of wooden supporters on railways.
- 1801. The first "edge" iron tramway or railway, at Lord Penrhyn's collieries.

\* Compiled from the Mining Almanacks, Mining Journals, Knight's Cyclopædia, Companions to the Almanack, Parliamentary Returns and Papers, Weale's Dictionaries, Lardner, Wood and others on Railways.

- 101. Symington's steam-boat experiments.
- „ Croydon and Wandsworth (Surrey) iron railway.
- 102. Trevithick and Vivian's high-pressure engine—*the first steam locomotive* for railways, turnpike roads, and other purposes.
- „ Symington's two steam-boats on the Forth and Clyde canals.
- 104. Trevithick constructed a steam locomotive for running carriages on the Merthyr Railway—*it was the first railway locomotive*. The cylinder was placed horizontally, as in locomotives now used. The heads of the piston rod and connecting rod were divided or forked, leaving room for the motion of the extremity of the crank, and giving motion to it, fixed on an axletree; on this axle cog wheels were placed, working into cog wheels on the axle of the hind wheels. This locomotive engine had only one cylinder of 8 inches diameter, whereas, since, the power of the locomotive has been increased to two cylinders of 18 inches diameter. In most essential particulars, this engine resembled those now in common use. It drew as many carriages as contained ten tons of bar iron a distance of nine miles, at the rate of five miles per hour.
- „ Fulton's first American patent for steam navigation.
- 107. Fulton's American steam-boat.
- 109. Trevithick's experiments to make a Thames Tunnel.
- 112. Bell's steam-boat the "Comet" plying between Glasgow and Helensburgh, at the rate of five miles per hour.
- 113. Mr. Blackett made a steam locomotive from Trevithick's model.
- 114. Mr. George Stephenson's first locomotive (July 27th), "My Lord," tried on the Killingworth tramway; made upon Blackett's model. This engine had two cylinders, each 8 inches diameter and 2 feet stroke; the boiler was cylindrical, 8 feet long and 34 inches diameter; the tube, 20 inches diameter, passing through the boiler; the cylinders worked two pair of wheels, by cranks placed at right angles, so that when the one was in full operation, the other was at its dead points, by which means the propelling power was always in action. The cranks

were held in their position by an endless chain, which passed round two cogged wheels placed under the engine, and which were fixed on the same axles on which the wheels were placed. The wheels in this case were fixed on the axles, and turned with them. It drew eight laden waggons, weighing thirty tons, at the rate of four miles per hour. The application of the two cylinders made the working of the engine regular, and secured the steady progressive motion which was wanted in Blackett's engine, there being only the single cylinder and fly-wheel.

- 1815. Mr. G. Stephens' patent for steam locomotives.
- 1818. New locomotives by Stephenson.
- 1821. Stockton and Darlington Railway Act.
  - „ Griffiths' patent for steam locomotives on common roads.
- 1822. Mr. David Gordon's patent for steam locomotives on common roads.
  - „ Act of Parliament for carrying passengers on the Stockton and Darlington line—*the first Act for passenger transit by railway.*
  - „ The Liverpool and Manchester Railway projected.
- 1824. The prospectus of the Liverpool and Manchester Company issued.
- 1825. The first locomotive built for drawing passengers on the Stockton and Darlington Railway — manufactured by Mr. George Stephenson.
  - „ Several patents about this period were taken out for steam locomotion on common roads; and carriages were produced and experiments made, the speed attained being from ten to twelve miles per hour. Mr. Gurney worked a steam engine carriage on the highway between Gloucester and Cheltenham, but, like other projectors, failed; so did Mr. Hancock, Col. Maceroni, and Sir James Anderson; and, at a later period, the latter and Mr. Rogers projected a company for using steam carriages on common roads in Ireland, but no successful result ensued.
- 1826. Act of Parliament for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

1829. Oct. Great trial of locomotives at Manchester. Mr. George Stephenson obtained a prize of £500 for the success of his "Rocket."

„ Acts passed for lines from Newton to Warrington, and from Newcastle to Carlisle.

1830. The Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened.

1832. Bill for making the London and Birmingham line thrown out in the House of Lords.

1833. Acts for the Grand Junction and London and Birmingham lines.

1834. London and Southampton Act.

1835. Great Western Act; also London and Croydon; Preston and Wyre; and Brandling Junction.

1836. Acts for the Midland Counties; Hull and Selby; Bristol and Exeter; North Midland; Birmingham and Derby; Sheffield and Rotherham; Manchester and Leeds; and Newcastle and Shields Lines.

1837. London and Brighton and other lines incorporated, and 22 Acts for deviations, &c. by previous lines, making 42 Railway Bills.

Up to 1840, 299 Acts had been passed for Railways.

From 1840 to 1850, 841 Acts.

The number of miles made in England, Scotland and Ireland, up to December 1853, was 7,641.

The number of passengers carried in the three kingdoms during the year ending December 1853, was 102,286,660; the gross receipts of all the lines in that year, for passengers, goods, &c., £18,028,746 15s. 11d.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE RAILWAY PASSENGER TAX.

SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART., M.P.—MR. M'CULLOCH—STATISTICS.

THOUGH the Railway Passenger Tax does not act to suppress and prohibit conveyances, as is the case with the stage tax, nevertheless, it is an impolitic and unjust duty, and one of those imposts, the continuance of which in this age of progress, of science, and of art, reflects disadvantageously on the liberal spirit of our financiers.

There are also the peculiar features of steam vessels, carrying passengers and goods, of common waggons, and of canal navigation, competing with the rail, being untaxed. It is as unjust to tax the South Eastern line, and let steam vessels to Gravesend, Herne Bay, Margate, and Ramsgate go free; or the north lines, while Ipswich, Hull, Edinburgh, and Aberdeen steamers are also free; as it is to tax the London omnibuses, and let the Thames boats, which run alongside them to Westminster, Chelsea, and Kew, go without an impost. Whether it be the rail or the horse, a system of laws which permits the levying of a public revenue from one mode of transit and not from another, is inequitable, unjust and impolitic.

These remarks must not be assumed as an advocacy to tax the river or the sea, but as supplying reasons why the communication by land should be placed upon an equality with that by water.

The committee of 1837 recommended the abolition of all taxes on public conveyances, and on carriages generally, at the earliest possible period, consistent with a due regard to the financial arrangements of the country, "and because" it appeared to them "that the diminution of revenue in consequence of the adoption

of such a course might at first appear considerable, it would, in a great measure, be compensated by the increased consumption of taxable commodities, while the inequality now so justly complained of would be removed, and a great accession afforded to the prosperity and comfort of the population."

The committee's advice proceeded after a careful inquiry, and it had reference to the revenue at that period derived from public conveyances, which the Parliamentary papers show to have been, in the year the committee made the report, £523,856 10s. 8½d.

Now the government last year, on certain of the public and private carriages, made these reductions.

Carriages irrespective of Licences.	Revenue 1852—53.	Relief 1852—53.
Hackney Carriages	£84,556 0 0	£26,000
Post Horses	150,060 16 4	54,000
Private Carriages	407,222 3 8	87,000
Private Horses	373,245 13 1	118,000
Stage Carriages*	218,142 7 11½	} NOTHING.
Railways	280,143 0 0	

We cannot but here feel inclined to find exception to legislation which makes so palpable a distinction, and though both the unrelieved public conveyances may be open to the charge of neglecting their own interest in not seeing to the subject, and that the omission may have been an unintentional addition to existing inequalities, it must be seen that the very reasons upon which these reductions were founded, are reasons strengthening the present claims to immediate relief.

Mr. M'Culloch, in writing of the passenger taxes upon horse power, observes: "That it is difficult to vindicate the policy of passenger taxes. Unlike the revenue derived from Tolls, no part of their produce is appropriated to the construction and repair of the roads: and notwithstanding it is admitted on all hands, that whatever facilitates the intercourse between different parts of the country is of the greatest advantage, these duties make it more expensive, and, consequently, more limited than it otherwise would be. *Taxes so opposed to the plainest prin-*

\* England and Scotland.

*ciples and most desirable results should be got rid of as soon as practicable."*

Upon the rail and the stage there is no relief.

Now the partial adoption of this committee's report in favor of post horse and job horse carriages used by the more wealthy classes, and in favor of the carriages of the wealthy, and no benefits being conferred upon stages and railways, which are the greater powers, and used more generally for the million, is a feature which makes the existence of the passenger tax on railways and stages demonstratively unfair.

The *Railway Times*, in an article on the subject of this passenger tax, observes,—

"Railway accommodation is admitted on all hands to be a general, nay, a national benefit. Unprofitable extensions, however much they detract from the profits of a company, are not less beneficial to a district than those which fully redeem the expectations originally held out, and adequately remunerate their proprietors. The service of the public is equally considered in both cases—advantage of the company merely in one. For the other case, we submit, there is a good and valid claim for the abrogation of the passenger tax; and doubly so in the present time, when it is universally contended that taxation should not impede the free dispensation of capital, the more dispersed employment of labour, and the healthy circulation of the currency among the various classes of which this mighty empire is composed."

Upon the subject of post horse and railway taxation, Sir R. Peel, in 1839, made these remarks:—

"I understand that railways have been of great service to those persons in the lower condition of life, whose capital is their labour; and you should consequently consider what great advantage it will be to that class of the community to have a rapid transfer of their capital from one part of the country to another. On the other hand, it is the upper classes of society that is chiefly interested about post horses; great caution and consideration are therefore necessary, before the House proceeds to increase the taxation upon railways or steam-boats. It is a question whether the increased communication has not, upon the whole, been beneficial to the

revenue, and whether, by forwarding private interests, you will not be injuring the revenue, and the general interests of the country."

How much in point are these remarks, when the post horse duty was so immensely reduced in 1853?

Again, Sir Robert said, in 1842, when the existing tax was reduced,—

"NOTHING BUT HARD NECESSITY WOULD INDUCE ME TO DERIVE REVENUE FROM RAILROADS."

It may be said, that the question of a repeal of the passenger tax on railways will only affect the commercial interests of the lines, which must, however, be regarded more as a reason in favor of abolition, than its continuance; for, wherever commercial intercourse is facilitated, the result must be the general benefit of the country. It would induce many favorable advantages to the masses, in the extension of the system of excursion trains; and it would benefit the revenue in another way, as the more railway transit is increased, the more is the consumption of other taxable commodities.

With these reflections, and authorities, we append the amount of the duty paid for the passengers traffic on all the lines in England, Scotland, and Wales, during the last two years:—

1852-3 .....	£280,143	14	3½
1853-4 .....	303,385	14	5

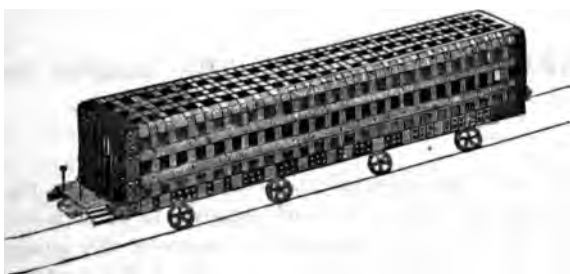


## SAFETY CARRIAGES FOR RAILWAYS.

*(From the Mining Journal.)*

The idea of constructing the bodies of railway carriages to render them of greater strength than at present made, without, at the same time, adding materially to the weight, has long occupied the attention of some individuals, and which appears at length likely to be successfully carried out. In a brief notice in our last Journal, we stated that a newly-constructed carriage had been introduced, under the name of the Life-preserving Car, with the view to prevent, as much as possible, fatal effects from concussion in cases of collision; and we now proceed to a more detailed description. Instead of being constructed of wood, as those now used, the body is formed of two sets of bands, of steel or other metal, one set running longitudinally, and the other in a transverse direction, forming, as it were, a complete piece of basket work, of the necessary dimensions for a carriage body. These bands are securely riveted or screwed at every intersection, and where greatly increased strength is required, the bands may be doubled, or even trebled, the rivets holding all firmly together, the outer covering, lining, and fittings up, being finished afterwards. This form of construction secures strength, and to nullify to the fullest extent the effects of concussion, a peculiar compound spring is introduced. Under the bottom of the carriage, placed longitudinally, is a wooden beam of large dimensions, on each end of which is fixed a thick mass of india-rubber, much compressed; over this, with its ends attached to each side of the floor of the carriage, passes a curved steel spring of the usual construction, from the centre of which, and opposite the end of the wooden beam, there projects a spiral steel spring, strongly secured in its place. It will thus be seen that in case of a collision the spiral springs receive the first shock, the concussive force is next communicated to the curved springs, and finally to the

india-rubber, by which arrangement, sudden jarring, and the consequent injury will, in most cases, be avoided.



This mode of constructing railway carriages has been introduced from the United States by Mr. La Mothe, and patented in this country by Mr. James Whitman, of New York, and the advantages claimed for the invention are, increased strength and power of resistance in cases of accident; lightness in weight in proportion to strength, as compared with carriages of wood; greater facility of construction, as two men, with a punching and riveting machine, can finish the frame work of a carriage 42 feet long, to hold 60 passengers, in two days, or even less; and diminish cost, in the first instance, with much greater durability. These iron or steel cases, or bodies, are carefully lined throughout, and stuffed and padded with an elastic and yielding material, by which, in case of a shock, the infliction of wounds and bruises will be still further prevented, in addition to the effects of the compound buffers already described. Even should a collision of more than usually destructive force occur, these carriages would certainly have an additional advantage in giving way by bending, after the elasticity of the springs had been overcome; whereas carriages of wood, in all such cases, fly into splinters, and are completely destroyed.

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## A ONE-WHEEL CARRIAGE: THE HORSES INSIDE.

*(From the Boston Chronotype, 1849.)*

A new and very novel invention called a one-wheel coach, has recently been tried out west, and promises to be of much value, especially on prairies, or wherever the surface of the ground is tolerably level. The vehicle consists of a large hollow wooden wheel, 14 feet in diameter, and 6 feet wide. The horses are placed inside, and propel it along in the same manner that a caged squirrel makes its wheel revolve. Slats are nailed on the inside floor of the wheel, by which the horses obtain foot-hold. In the centre is a small iron shaft, from which suspend hangers, which support four comfortable sofas for passengers; the wheel thus revolves freely, the seats remain in perfect equilibrium. The arrangement for guiding the carriage is very simple and effective; it can make a much shorter turn than a stage coach. A very successful trial of one of these carriages was recently made on the State Road between Canal Dover and Tuscarawas county, Ohio, which perfectly demonstrated their utility in transporting very heavy loads with ease and rapidity. The carriage was filled by a party of fourteen ladies and gentlemen, with two heavy draught horses previously trained to propel them. The distance between the two places, five miles, was performed in twenty-eight minutes on the first trip, and twenty-five minutes on the second. The horses are not confined by harness, and as they travel as it were on an endless plank road, their work is comparatively easy.

## APPENDIX.

## PART III.—PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS, &amp;c.

1.—*Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons.*

The subject of the Taxation on Stages being referred to in the preceding pages, and that Taxation being the great evil preventing progression in the coaching trade, it may be useful to publish some extracts from the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons in 1837, on Internal Communication Taxation. In reading it, our surprise is, that in 1854 the same unequal and anomalous state of taxation exists, as far as the evidence is applicable at this period. It appears, says the Committee's Report,

That a great inequality exists between the rates of taxation imposed on the different modes of internal communication,—all land travelling, where the motive power is animal, being heavily taxed, while land travelling, where steam is the motive power, is comparatively lightly burthened; and the conveyance of passengers by steam in rivers or arms of the sea is free from every species of taxation.

The taxation on land travelling by Steam Power consists of a mileage duty on the passengers conveyed, being one halfpenny per mile on every four passengers; but there is this broad distinction to be observed between steam and stage coaches, that while the former are charged only on the passengers actually conveyed, the latter are charged on the number of passengers the coach is licensed to carry, whether it be full or empty.

Very valuable evidence was submitted to Your Committee by Sir Edward Lees, Secretary to the Post-office at Edinburgh, as to the increased speed, security and cheapness with which the post might be conveyed over the cross roads of Scotland by the establishment of mail-cars similar to those now in use in Ireland, thereby increasing the Revenue, and opening up districts now altogether destitute of any mode of public conveyance; the same remarks would necessarily apply to many cross roads in England. *The grand obstacle, however, to the establishment of these cars is the heavy taxation on travelling, which utterly deters individuals from engaging in such speculations; while in Ireland, where the roads are decidedly inferior, but where none of these taxes exist, cheap and expeditious public conveyances are everywhere to be found.*

It does not appear clear why the mail-coaches conveying the post should be charged with any mileage or other duty, because it must be obvious that what is gained by the Office of Stamps and Taxes is repaid by the Post-office department in their contracts for carrying the mails, with the additional loss of the poundage allowed to the Distributors of Stamps; whereas, were the mails to run free of duty, a premium would in many instances be offered for the privilege of carrying them.

As to evidence, the Committee state that they had inquired, and that

Many post and coach masters who were examined by Your Committee, connected with various lines of road throughout the country, more particularly those which come in competition with steam-power, stated THE RUIN WHICH IS DAILY APPROACHING THEM, AND THEIR UTTER INABILITY, LOADED AS THEY ARE WITH A HEAVY TAXATION, TO COMPETE WITH UNTAXED STEAM-POWER: similar evidence was tendered from almost every district in the island.

The result is that the Committee report thus :—

On the whole, however, considering the objections which would undoubtedly arise to the imposition of a tax on a mode of communication now so extensively in use, and the immense advantage to every class of the inhabitants of a commercial country of cheap and expeditious travelling, Your Committee earnestly recommend *the abolition of all taxes on public conveyances and on carriages generally, at the earliest period consistent with a due regard to the financial arrangements of the country.* It appears to Your Committee, that though the diminution of revenue in consequence of the adoption of such a course might at first appear considerable, it would in a great measure be compensated by the increased consumption of taxable commodities, while the inequality now so justly complained of would be removed, and a great accession afforded to the prosperity and comfort of the population.

The Legislature, therefore, have inquired, and reported in favor of the Freedom of Conveyances from Taxation; and this report becomes, therefore, a valuable evidence in support of the propositions contained in these pages, that the material obstacle to the improvement and extension of public conveyances is the Tax. The inquiry was made in 1837, and upon that inquiry the Committee's advice was given. The result of an inquiry at this time, 1854, will considerably strengthen the case.

From the evidence I extract the following, separating the questions raised as to the post-horse duty. The mileage duty has been abolished on those conveyances, and the obnoxious impost, singularly enough, still remains on the more general Public Conveyance—the Stage.

Mr. B. W. Horne, in his evidence, states the following as the Duty paid in 1837 :—

14. State to the Committee what are the taxes you are subject to on your stage-coaches?—A graduated scale of mileage duty; if four passengers, 1d. per mile a single mile; six passengers, 1½d.; nine, 2d.; twelve, 2½d.; fifteen, 3d.; eighteen, 3½d.

15. Sir Henry Parnell.] Is that inside and out?—Either in or out.

16. And whether the carriage has four wheels or two?—Two or four horses, or six, or two, or one; that makes no difference.

17. *Chairman*] You pay that duty, then, upon what your coach is licensed to carry, whether full or empty?—Just so, with the option of taking out a supplementary licence for more or less.

18. Of course you very often in this way have to pay duty on seats which are not filled?—I should say at least five times out of six.

19. *Sir Henry Parnell*] What is about the average?—The average is about two insides and eight out; when you take a licence out for fifteen passengers, it is about ten, about two parts out of three.

20. Is that up and down?—Take it each way; if we are licensed for twelve, we consider about eight passengers on the average.

The duty is now three half-pence per mile on any number of passengers for mileage, but the principle of Taxation is the same; *i.e.*, the coach pays, whether it is full or empty—the tax begins to run immediately the wheel turns. In 1837, also, the proprietor paid £5 for a yearly licence—now, £3 3*s.*; £1 5*s.* then for each coachman or guard, and now in London 5*s.*

**Mr. Thomas Fagg, Coach Proprietor.**

242. Do you conceive that upon parallel lines of road, which would be to a certain extent affected by the railways, a reduction or abolition of the duty would enable you to continue to run, whereas, if the duties remain at their present rate, you will be obliged to put down your coaches?—I think that in many cases, if the duty were reduced, or altogether abolished, we should be enabled to maintain coaches to towns and situations not very remote from the railways.

**Mr. Joseph Hearn, Proprietor of Stage Coaches, gave evidence :**

278. It was stated to the Committee the other day, that coach proprietors would not be able to compete with railways upon a direct line, even if they were exempted from all duty, but that with coaches running upon parallel lines at some distance from the railway, a reduction of the duty would enable them to keep up coaches, which otherwise must be put down; do you agree in that opinion?—I do.

279. *Mr. Parker.*] Are the apprehensions you entertain yourself, entertained generally by the body to which you belong?—I think they are.

280. Your means of communication with the trade generally enables you to form an opinion as to the way in which they view these changes?—They all appear to be of the same opinion.

**Sir John Hall, Bart., Trustee of the East Lothian and other Trusts.**

340. Do you conceive that these duties prevent carriages being kept for the accommodation of the public at villages and stages upon great lines of road, where you may be set down without the means of travelling across the country to your destination?—Undoubtedly; I am aware of that being the fact in many instances.

341. It is hardly necessary to ask, whether it would not be a great accommodation to the public, were such conveyances kept?—Most certainly.

342. Do you think the removal of those duties would tend very much to the establishment of such conveyances?—Undoubtedly.

345. Do you anticipate, that were the taxation on the different modes of travelling equalized, a portion of that traffic which has been removed from the roads would again return to it?—I have no doubt of it; for it is a matter of calculation, that if either the travelling by posting or coaching were cheaper, or the travelling by sea were a little dearer, the generality of people would rather go by land than water.

346. Do you not anticipate, that were the taxation on travelling diminished, there would be a great increase of travelling among the community?—Undoubtedly.

347. And it is scarcely necessary to ask whether, in a commercial country like this, you conceive this would be one of the greatest advantages the public could receive?—I have no hesitation in saying I believe it would.

Sir Edward Lees, Secretary of the Post-office, Edinburgh.

386. What is the nature of the carriages which you would suggest as proper for carrying the mails on cross roads?—I would prefer, at first, the same description of carriage as has been found from experience to be so beneficial in Ireland, a car; at present I do not understand that there is any description of conveyance at all upon many of these cross roads, if upon any of them; and the consequence must be, that the public suffer considerable inconvenience in endeavouring to get to the greater lines of communication in the country where coaches are established. I have a drawing here which exactly describes the Irish Car [*producing the same*]. It is drawn by one horse, and it conveys as many as six passengers, and travels at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour; in Scotland I would confine it to four passengers, and make it a lighter description of vehicle; and if in Ireland, where the roads are much worse than in Scotland, they can be carried at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, there would be no difficulty in carrying at that rate of speed in Scotland. The present rate at which the posts in Scotland are conveyed on horseback, is generally about seven miles an hour, and on foot about three; so that in point of expedition the advantage would be very great, and in point of safety it would also be considerable.

389. *Chairman.*] What is the figure of the carriage used in Ireland?—It is a square carriage with two wheels; a driver's seat, under which is placed the mail, and the passengers enter at the rear of it, and sit vis-à-vis.

392. Do you think that the heavy rate of taxation which now presses upon land conveyance would be a material obstacle to the establishment of such carriages as you speak of?—I HAVE BEEN ENDEAVOURING TO ESTABLISH THOSE CARS, AND THEY HAVE TOTALLY FAILED; BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT THAT IS OWING ENTIRELY TO THE PUBLIC TAXES, TO WHICH ANY PERSON EMBARKING IN THE SPECULATION AT PRESENT WOULD BE SUBJECT.

394. *Mr. Parker.*] How long has this system been in operation in Ireland?—It had been in operation several years before I left, which was in 1831; I should say about 12 or 14 years.

395. Has it had the effect of diminishing the expense of the conveyance of the post?—Undoubtedly, I should think so.

396. There is no taxation whatever there?—No.

397. What was the state of the post in Ireland when you were first acquainted with it?—Nothing could be more deplorable in every point of view; nothing can give the Committee a greater proof of the importance of affording facilities

the establishment of public carriages than a comparison between the state of Ireland in 1801, when I was first appointed, and when I left in 1831. In 1801 there were but three public carriages in the kingdom, if I recollect right, in which the mails were carried, and there were none on any of the cross roads. There were very few roads of any description in the country, and none on which coaches could travel beyond the rate of four miles an hour. They could only go at the rate of four miles an hour for many years after I was appointed; but when I left Ireland in 1831, the mail-coach system had been extended to every corner of the kingdom, and putting a chain round the entire coast of Ireland; do not think that there was one single link unsupplied with a mail coach, and they were then travelling at the rate of from nine to ten English miles an hour.

412. *Mr. Parker.*] Has any practical inconvenience arisen in Ireland from carrying passengers in mail carts?—No, the contrary has been found to be the case.

413. You are aware that in England there is an objection to that?—There is a regulation of the Treasury prohibiting it, and there is a statute which imposes a heavy penalty for doing it.

414. *Chairman.*] Do you conceive that that is an absurd regulation?—INDOUBTEDLY.

415. *Mr. Handley.*] Do you not think that if passengers were allowed to be carried, increased security would be given?—Certainly I do; and I could give a very strong proof of the necessity of it. On a very important line of between 60 and 80 miles, we were for months in the course of last year subject to constant plunder of the mails; all our efforts to detect it were in vain for a long time, and it is only within these three weeks that we have got to the full detection of it. Our mails have been opened day after day, though secured in the best manner, and we could not trace it, owing to the variety of hands through which the bags went. They went through the hands of post-boys, ferrymen and others, and we could for a long time come to no conclusion as to where, how or by whom the depredations were committed. It went on for many months, and the expense of our efforts to detect it amounted to 300*l.*, 400*l.*, or 500*l.* If a mail cart carrying passengers had been on that road, they would have been a great protection.

416. *Mr. Handley.*] If in any quarter apprehensions were entertained that designing persons might, as passengers, effect robberies of the mail, would not such persons have an equal facility at the present moment of stopping the mail in its progress?—Certainly, and much greater.

417. Then you consider that security would be obtained, and that the mail could not by possibility be placed in greater risk than it is at present?—On the contrary, I always considered that there is safety in numbers.

**Mr. William Clarke Wimberley, Coach Master, Doncaster.**

455. Have the coach proprietors found their business a remunerating one for some years past?—I can safely and conscientiously say they have not.

462. Do you conceive that the coachmasters have any thing to complain of on the score of unequal taxation?—Certainly, and they do complain of it.

465. Do you not think all the coach proprietors could reasonably demand is, that as far as regards taxation they should be put on an equality with their competitors?—Yes, and that is all they desire, and as long as there was not this unfair competition, the coach interest never thought of complaining, but paid immense sums to the government with the greatest cheerfulness, and even now they would not desire a reduction, if it were not that they are forced to do it by unequal competition.



466. Looking to the further increase of steam as a motive power by land as well as water, do you contemplate still more serious consequences than have yet occurred to the coach proprietors?—*Certainly, they do contemplate almost the cessation of travelling, and therefore what they ask is merely a sort of reprieve, or power to gain a little before they are completely done up.*

**Mr. Charles Collins, Jun., Coach Proprietor, Blackheath.**

494. Do you conceive that you have to complain of the amount of taxation which you pay to Government upon your coaches?—As compared with other conveyances, I certainly think we have.

495. You did not complain of these taxes so long as you had not to compete with untaxed power?—*Certainly not.*

**Mr. Robert Philip, Proprietor of Steam Boats.**

525. Are you enabled to carry more cheaply in consequence of being free from taxation?—*Most undoubtedly.*

526. Do you conceive that the coaches would be enabled to carry more cheaply, if they were free from taxation?—*Most assuredly they would.*

527. Then your wish is not to secure a monopoly of the carrying trade by an unequal scheme of taxation, but to communicate to the public generally the advantage of cheap conveyance?—*Yes, by abolishing all burthens upon internal communication, if possible.*

537. Have you any other observation to make to the Committee upon this subject?—Yes; I would beg to observe, that if steam-power is to be taxed on board of steam-vessels, I think, by parity of reasoning, that the same power ought to be taxed in all manufactories in the country; for a tax upon travelling should not be imposed because you travel merely by steam; for it must be remembered that other goods in the country are manufactured by steam; I think, therefore, that if a tax were to be imposed upon steam-power, a tax ought to be levied over all the horse-power in the kingdom by steam; and another observation is this, if the tax were proposed to be levied upon steam-ships, either by the tonnage or by the horse-power, then I should consider that a tax upon sailing vessels ought also to be imposed; because the sailing vessels employ another species of power, namely, the winds of heaven, in propelling them, and that is the cheapest of all the powers we have got; and if, therefore, mere power is to be taxed in order to relieve animal power, then the power of the wind ought to be taxed as well as the power of steam.

538. *Mr. Parker.*] Then you think, if steam-power in navigation is to be taxed, that all power ought to be taxed in travelling, whether by wind or steam?—Yes; because these are general principles, which, I think, would only be fair; for if legislation is to seize hold of one point, and not to apply that by a general principle throughout, it will be deemed unfair by some parties.

539. If the matter were fresh, you would contend that all travelling ought to be equally taxed, whether by land or by water?—Yes.

540. *Chairman.*] Is there not this difference between steam-power employed in travelling and steam-power employed in manufactories, that in travelling it is brought into competition with another power which is taxed, whereas in manufactories all the rival powers are equally untaxed with itself?—I conceive that formerly, when a horse-mill was in operation for driving a certain quantity of machinery, that steam-power coming in competition with

it has driven animal power out of use, and this I conceive is upon the same principle.

Last, but not the least, the following Extracts from the evidence of Mr. Richard Smith, the Government Assessor of Stage Coach Duties, proves the Inequality of the Mileage Tax on Stage Coaches, that evasion of duty occurred, and that the Government department felt that they were the instruments of collecting an impost which pressed unfairly upon the trade.

Mr. Smith's opinion as to the Mileage Duties is applicable now, for though the radiated scale was reduced to a fixed mileage, the inequality and injustice is more felt in 1854, when railways are differently taxed, than in 1837: the fiscal error of allowing the mileage duty at all is apparent, especially when the rail pays on actual receipts.

352. That taxation upon stage-coaches is unequal at present, comparing animal as a motive power with steam, is it not?—*Decidedly so*; the rate of taxation upon travelling by railroad is the eighth of a penny per mile; the average rate of taxation on travelling by stage-coach is one farthing per mile per passenger; the number of passengers charged is according to the license in the stage-coaches, and according to the number actually carried on the railroad; the actual rates upon stage-coaches are about a halfpenny for every three passengers; the increased rate arises from their not carrying the full number of passengers.

Mr. Smith advocates equal modes of taxation for both conveyances.

358. Then, so far as railway competition is concerned, how would you recommend that the duty should be equalized? To place them on an equality, I think it would be necessary to charge the railway companies with a halfpenny for every passenger for every four miles, or fraction of four miles, instead of the present rate, which is a halfpenny for every four passengers per mile. I would then charge the stage-coach proprietor a halfpenny for every four sittings prepared in and upon his carriage, per mile or fraction of a mile.

375. *Chairman.*] Have you any other suggestion to make to the Committee?—I would suggest, that if any change should be made in the stage-coach Act, the present supplementary licences should be increased in price, as great inconvenience has been found in the collection of the revenue from the present lowness of charge for them, arising from the immense number of alterations. I would also suggest that the widow of a stage-coach proprietor, with the consent of the executors or administrators, be allowed to take out the usual supplementary licence on the death of her husband, during the continuance of the original licence; also, that on a man's marrying a woman having a licence, the licence which she had before her coverture should be made available to the man also by supplementary licence: then with respect to mail-coaches, that they should either be obliged to carry a numbered plate, or that the duty upon them should be entirely repealed: the reason of my making this

suggestion is, because considerable frauds are now being carried on by the mail-coaches, which cannot be checked, owing to there being no possible means of identifying them. I consider that the whole of the duty on mail-coaches might be repealed with gain to the revenue,—the fact being, *that the duty levied by the Stamp-office upon the coach proprietor is repaid by the Post-office in the contract*, the only additional circumstance of the collection being, that whatever portion is collected by the distributors of stamps pays the poundage, which is lost to the public.

547. In the event of the 5*l*. licence duty upon stage-coaches being abolished, do you conceive that any regulation would be necessary to ensure the payment of the mileage duty to the Government?—I should think it would be highly desirable that some deposit should be required from the parties applying for licences, to be repaid or allowed in discharge of the last payment due from them.

*2.—Petition of the Stage Carriage Proprietors, signed by 223 persons ; presented to the House of Commons on the 6th of March, 1854, by Sir John Villiers Shelley, Bart., M.P.*

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The humble Petition of the undersigned Proprietors of  
Public Stage Carriages

**SHEWETH,**

**THAT** your Petitioners have for several years been Licensed for the conveyance of Passengers by Stage Carriages, and have paid, in addition to the annual Licence of £3 3s. per carriage, large sums of money from time to time for the Mileage Duties of Three half-pence per mile for every mile travelled by each vehicle, as fixed in 1842, by 5 and 6 Vic. c. 79 ;—

**THAT**, owing to the increase of Railways, and the competition of untaxed Trains and untaxed Steam Vessels, the Stage Carriage Trade in Great Britain has been of late years greatly depressed—such duties have become very oppressive, and many carriages have made unprofitable returns, and have consequently been withdrawn from the road ;—

**THAT** the Proprietors of Stage Carriages have sustained considerable losses, not only by payment of a very heavy Tax when their trade was unprofitable, but by the sacrifice of property in the relinquishing of Stages ; and those Proprietors having capital in existing carriages are anxious to preserve it, and to continue their Trade ;—

**THAT** at present the Mileage Duties amount to a Taxation as high as 15 per cent., on the average, upon Passenger Receipts ;

That in many instances it has exceeded such per centage—in some few it has been less—but the said 15 per cent. is about the average ;

THAT in 1837 a Committee of your Honorable House “earnestly recommended the ABOLITION OF ALL TAXES ON PUBLIC CARRIAGES, and on Carriages generally, at the earliest possible period consistent with a due regard to the financial arrangements of the country.” They also stated their opinion, “that the revenue would be compensated by the increased consumption of taxable commodities, while the inequality would be removed ;”—

THAT the Revenue from Stage Carriages at the time of this Report was Half-a-Million of money, which has since decreased so much, that the Country returns in England (1852-3) exhibited an income of only £73,903 ;—

THAT the Revenue has diminished of late years, from the oppressive and suppressive operation of the Mileage Duties ; and your Petitioners are certain, that if the same Tax be continued, the Revenue will still further decrease, while the population in many places will be without the means of legalised conveyances ;—

THAT your Petitioners respectfully call the attention of your Honorable House to the very liberal manner in which Railways are Taxed, and to the fact that the Gross Receipts of the Railways amount to near Sixteen Millions of money ; That the amount of the professed Tax of 5 per cent. upon Railways, which was paid to the Public Revenue account in 1852 by the Railway Companies, amounted to the sum of £280,143 only, being thus a Taxation of little more than  $1\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. upon such Gross Receipts ; whilst the Taxes levied upon Animal or Horse power are 800 per cent. more—and there is no Tax whatever upon Steam by Water ;—

THAT the vast benefits conferred upon commerce and social progress by Steam has been materially furthered by the laws relating to that Locomotive power imposing no taxation upon Conveyances by Water, nor upon certain Trains by Land, and to the exemption from duty of a larger number of trains than was contemplated by Parliament when it established the Parliamentary Trains. If the Railways had been taxed the same as the Stages have, that is, by a Mileage Duty of Three half-pence per mile for every carriage travelling, the receipts of the Railways, after

payment of such Tax, would not have yielded to the Shareholders a remunerative dividend; That these circumstances your Petitioners respectfully urge upon your Honorable House, as further illustrating the great injustice of maintaining the present system of Duties upon the Mileage of Stages; That also the Iron Roads may be said to be the Great Rivers for the flow of commercial transactions and social intercourse, and the Stage Roads the tributary or feeding streams—it would thus appear opposed to the plainest principles and the most desirable results, to levy from the passenger by the stream to the river a heavier tax than when he is on the river—whereas by placing both under the same just and equal law as to freedom of Taxation, an additional impetus would be given to the larger power;—

THAT the owners of Stage Carriages expected some relief to maintain their trade; but they have, with dismay, found that last year your Honorable House, by reducing the Taxes on the Carriages of the wealthy and upper classes, increased the original Inequalities, the Injustice and the Oppression of the Stage Carriage Tax;—

THAT your Petitioners respectfully submit to your Honorable House the following figures in corroboration of their Statement as to the partiality shown to the Carriages of the wealthy by the reduction of Taxation in 1853:—

	Revenue 1852—53.				Relief, 1853.	
Hackney Carriages .....	£84,556	0	0	...	£26,000	} Total, £285,000
Post and Job Horses ...	150,060	16	4	...	54,000	
Private Carriages.....	407,222	3	8	...	87,000	
Private Horses.....	373,245	13	1	...	118,000	
Stage Carriages (Eng- land and Scotland) }	218,142	7	11½*		NO RELIEF	

THAT laws which operate practically to permit the rich to travel by Steam upon the carriers paying 5 per cent. Tax, but excluding the labouring classes from travelling by Stages, unless their carriers pay 15 per cent. Tax, are, your Petitioners most respectfully submit, opposed to the fundamental principles of Justice and Equity;—

That the injustice of paying the Stage Mileage Duties has been so extensively and severely felt, that men have violated the law, and

\* This includes the tax on the London omnibuses.

evaded such duties, as your Petitioners are prepared to prove, in many country places, by carrying passengers in Omnibuses, Vans and Waggon, professing to carry goods only; and such untaxed vehicles must increase on account of the requirements of the population in proportion as Taxed Stages decrease;—

THAT your Petitioners are certain that the Abolition of these Mileage Duties will be most beneficial to many country towns and villages lying off the lines of Railways, and to Provincial Railway Stations, where at this period the supply of Omnibuses is very limited, and will cause the speedy placing on the road between such places and other parts of the kingdom, of a great mass of Coaches and Omnibuses at Cheap Fares, and thereby increase facilities to local commercial pursuits; give employ to thousands of persons; re-establish the Stage Carriage Building Trade, now almost extinct; cause an extra consumption of Hay, Corn, Straw, &c., and otherwise add to the prosperity and comfort of the population;—

THAT Stage Carriages, if free from Taxation, could carry passengers to and from numerous populous points at the rate of One Penny per Mile; and your Petitioners pray your Honorable House at least to exempt Carriages, carrying passengers at such a rate of fares, from Taxation, the same as Railways;—

THAT your Petitioners humbly submit the following grounds in support of their Prayer for the TOTAL ABOLITION OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF MILEAGE DUTIES ON STAGE CARRIAGES IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES:—

*First*—Because they are unjust and oppressive, the amount being, as previously stated, on the average, 15 per cent. on the Receipts from Fares;—

*Second*—Because they enforce an average Tax of £80 per annum upon every stud of eight horses when employed in Public Stages; the sum of £30 only being the sum charged for the same number of horses when employed in Post and Job Carriages; and the sum of £11 18s. only when the same number are employed in Private Carriages;—

*Third*—Because Railways have had the effect of materially reducing the Fares charged to passengers by Stages—thus increasing the per centage of Taxation to its present oppressive

amount, whilst also the price of horses has increased; and such large payments have ruined many traders with small capital;—

*Fourth*—Because Steam Vessels and Parliamentary Trains—a primary and increasing source of competition with Horse power—are altogether free from Taxation;—

*Fifth*—Because the Express, Mail and First and Second-class Trains are only taxed at 5 per cent. on the actual Passengers' Fares; and Parliamentary and Goods Trains being exempt from Duty, the total average Taxation on Railway Companies is, as before stated, but little more than  $1\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. on the Gross Receipts;—

*Sixth*—Because the reduction of the Post and Job Horse Tax will create greater competition with Stages; and that reduction, and also the recent reliefs granted to Hackney Carriages, and to Private Carriages and Private Horses, necessarily increases the original inequalities of Taxation on Public Stages;—

*Seventh*—Because by abolishing this Taxation, the middle and laboring classes of the population will obtain great advantages in the regular supply of fresh conveyances;—

*Eighth*—Because the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons recommended the "Entire Abolition" of Taxation on "Public Carriages," and such material relief was so extended last year to all other Carriages, Public and Private, with the single exception of Public Stages;—and,

*Ninth*—Because the principle of Liberal Taxation also adopted towards Ireland, in fixing last year a temporary Licence of £8 only upon the Public Stages of Dublin, is one which renders the existing Taxation of similar vehicles in Great Britain more unjust, unequal and anomalous;—

THAT under the above circumstances, your Petitioners earnestly Appeal to your Honorable House to consider their case not as a question of finance, but as one of public necessity and of Justice.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly Pray that your Honorable House will Abolish the existing System of Taxation on Stage Carriages in England, Scotland and Wales;

AND YOUR PETITIONERS WILL EVER PRAY.



3.—*In the Session of 1854, Thirty-three Petitions were presented to the House of Commons from populous Cities and Towns, signed by 5,237 persons. The Petition from the City of Bath was as follows:—*

To the Honorable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament Assembled.

*The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the City of Bath, in the County of Somerset,*

SHEWETH,

THAT all Laws should be equal in their operation, whatever may be the station in life or pursuits of the persons whom they affect; That unequal laws produce injustice and oppression, and have a restrictive and prohibitory influence on the social and commercial progress of mankind;—

THAT it appears to your Petitioners that the laws affecting the Internal conveyances of England, Scotland and Wales, are most unjust and unequal; That they act with oppression on the Owners of Public Stage Carriages, and have suppressed the supply of such conveyances between many country towns and villages; and that thus rapid, cheap and steady intercourse between all classes of the population, and facilities to small traders in distant places and suburban districts not accommodated by Railways, are very restricted and limited;—

THAT this is owing, your Petitioners believe, to the amount of the Taxes assessed upon Stage Coaches;—

THAT it appears that upon the carrying of Passengers by Steam Vessels and by Parliamentary Trains by Railway, no Taxes whatever are levied; That such Express, Mail and other Trains as convey the wealthy and upper classes, are only taxed to the extent of 5 per cent. on the actual Passenger Fares received, the receipts for carrying Goods being Free from Duty, whilst Stage Carriages in England, Scotland and Wales, are assessed at the rate of Three half-pence per mile for every mile

travelled by each vehicle, and that whether a Single Passenger is carried or None; by which mode of levying the Revenue Duty, a Taxation averaging 15 per cent. on the Receipts of Stages is imposed upon these conveyances;—

THAT in Ireland Railways are not Taxed at all; and in 1853 an Act passed your Honorable House, under which the Dublin Stages are only subject to a Revenue Duty of £8 each, with a discretionary power to the Lord-Lieutenant to remit or reduce even that sum;—

THAT in 1853 your Honorable House reduced the Taxation on the Carriages and Horses used by the wealthy and upper classes, to the amount of £285,000; but on the Stages—Carriages which are used by the Public at large, and very often by the poorer classes—there was no reduction in Taxation;—

THAT your Petitioners are anxious to see all unjust and unequal laws repealed, and every oppressive system of Taxation abolished; and also that the freedom from Taxation conferred on Steam Transit by Land and Water should be extended to the Public Conveyances by Horse Power.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly Pray that your Honorable House will abolish the existing System of Taxation on Stage Carriages in England, Scotland and Wales;

AND YOUR PETITIONERS WILL EVER PRAY.

SIGNED BY

T. Gills, Mayor of Bath.

N. Duff, J. P. for Bath.

Joseph Brace, ditto.

G. Blathwaye (Major), J.P. for Somerset.

H. R. Ricardo, Banker.

George Moger, Jun., Banker.

F. H. Falkner, Banker.

William Long, Banker and J.P.

G. C. Tugwell, Banker.

And twenty-nine Solicitors, Wine Merchants, and influential firms.

*[The above Petition will be useful as a form for future Petitions, which should be written out on a sheet of paper, signed, and sent to London to a M.P., with the ends open, written on the corner "Parliamentary Petition," and it will go free of Postage. It is imperative that the subscribers should sign their own names, and that one signature should be written upon the sheet upon which the Petition is copied.]*

## MILEAGE DUTY AND LICENCES.

*Return to an Order of the Honorable The House of Commons,  
dated the 8th of August, 1853 ;—for,*

A Return “of the amount of Mileage Duty and Licences (respectively) paid in each of the last Four Years, ended the 5th day of January last, by Stage Carriage Proprietors in *England*; showing also the respective Amounts paid in each Year for the Metropolis.”

MILEAGE DUTY.									
—	Years ended January 5th.								
	1850.		1851.		1852.		1853.		
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	
Country.. ..	70,231	4 0	68,642	16 8	66,938	11 10	67,224	3 4	
Metropolis ..	105,424	9 10	113,123	13 10	135,641	4 2	136,318	16 3	
Total, England	175,655	13 10	181,766	10 6	202,579	16 0	203,542	19 7	
LICENCE DUTY.									
—	Years ended January 5th.								
	1850.		1851.		1852.		1853.		
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	
Country.. ..	6,614	3 0	6,604	18 0	6,380	10 0	6,679	16 0	
Metropolis ..	4,295	0 0	4,493	8 0	5,885	4 0	4,663	19 0	
Total, England	10,909	3 0	11,098	6 0	12,265	14 0	11,343	15 0	

Inland Revenue Office, London,  
August 12th, 1853.

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The following list will show that the number published of the MINING JOURNAL surpasses that of the entire Railway press:—

Newspapers.	1851.	1852.	1853.
<b>MINING JOURNAL</b> .....	<b>118,750</b>	<b>147,000</b>	<b>200,032</b>
RAILWAY TIMES .....	86,530	81,000	88,300
HERAPATH'S JOURNAL .....	119,100	121,004	83,183
RAILWAY RECORD .....	28,350	25,500	19,473
RAILWAY GAZETTE .....	7,900	7,500	4,500
	241,880	235,004	194,427
<b>MINING JOURNAL</b> .....	<b>118,750</b>	<b>147,000</b>	<b>200,032</b>

The other Commercial Newspapers may be thus classed,—also showing the circulation of the MINING JOURNAL to be considerably more than all of them put together:—

Newspapers.	1851.	1852.	1853.
LONDON COMMERCIAL RECORD .....	36,300	35,600	41,230
THE REPORTER .....	24,881	12,075	32,550
JOURNAL OF COMMERCE .....	23,000	21,000	27,500
LONDON MERCANTILE JOURNAL ....	17,500	19,300	15,500
THE MERCHANT .....	23,000	18,000	14,000
	124,688	105,975	130,800
<b>MINING JOURNAL</b> .....	<b>118,750</b>	<b>147,000</b>	<b>200,032</b>

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Has consented to make this Journal an organ for giving expression (Weekly) to views and opinions on such leading topics of the day as his principles, his peculiar position, and a due regard for the true interests of England, together with his practical experience in European affairs, may induce him to communicate. The co-operation of LOUIS KOSSUTH will commence on SUNDAY, the 7th of January, 1855. The Proprietors of the SUNDAY TIMES have resolved to spare no exertion in making their Journal

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